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## Social Media Policies and Academic Freedom: Higher Education Faculty and Administrator Perceptions

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Andrew C. Diamond  
*Concordia University - Portland*

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Concordia University–Portland

College of Education

Doctorate of Education Program

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SOCIAL MEDIA POLICIES AND ACADEMIC FREEDOM: HIGHER EDUCATION  
FACULTY AND ADMINISTRATOR PERCEPTIONS

Andrew Diamond

Concordia University – Portland

College of Education

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of College of Education

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education in

Higher Education

Committee Chair, Chris Jenkins, Ph.D.

Angela Owusu-Ansah, Ph.D.

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Concordia University – Portland

2017

## ABSTRACT

The aim of this study was to determine the perceptions higher education faculty members and administrators have on the use of social media, whether academic freedom applies to social media, and the legal protections of academic freedom on social media. A quantitative survey and semi-structured interviews were employed to gather descriptive data about perceptions from a mixed group of higher education faculty and administrators. Chi square analysis was used to determine significance of constructs. Results from this survey indicate that administrators are more likely to use social media personally and professionally, while faculty members are more likely to believe the protections of academic freedom apply to social media. Fewer than half of both groups believed social media was protected by academic freedom. This study demonstrated a definite need for greater understanding of academic freedom protections by administrators and further research in this unexplored territory.

*Keywords:* higher education, academic freedom, social media, administrator perceptions, faculty perceptions, social media policy

## DEDICATION

For my father.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

My family has always been supportive, and without them I could not have accomplished this. My sister Rachel not only helped provide the core idea behind this study, but also was always there to listen to me vent. My brother Aaron always helped to distract me by yelling at the refs during Timbers and Blazers games. One of these days he'll agree with a call. My mom was always there to invite me over for a home cooked meal and cookies, two necessary ingredients in any journey as long as this one. Finally, my dad provided me with every form of support I could need, as well as being a role model for the man I someday hope to become.

I would be remiss if I did not thank my committee. Dr. Chris Jenkins stepped into a difficult situation and was able sort everything out and get this project back on track. If it were not for him I would probably still be working on this dissertation for a few more years. Dr. Angela Owusu-Ansah also came to my rescue, helping to turn my ramblings into the orderly and comprehensible document before you. So, to Dr. Jenkins, Dr. Owusu-Ansah, and countless others at Concordia University, I extend my most sincere thanks.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT .....	i
DEDICATION .....	ii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	iii
LIST OF FIGURES.....	ix
LIST OF TABLES.....	x
Chapter 1: Introduction.....	1
Introduction to the Problem.....	1
Background, Context, History, and Conceptual Framework for the Problem.....	3
Statement of the Problem.....	4
Purpose of the Proposed Study.....	5
Research Questions.....	5
Rationale, Relevance, and Significance of the Proposed Study.....	5
Nature of the Proposed Study.....	6
Definition of Terms.....	7
Assumptions, Delimitations, and Limitations.....	7
Chapter 1 Summary.....	8
Chapter 2: Literature Review.....	9
Introduction to the Literature Review.....	9
Conceptual Framework.....	11
Review of Research Literature and Methodological Literature.....	15
Social media.....	15
Social networking defined.....	16



History of social networking.....	18
Social media use in higher education.....	18
Faculty and social networking.....	20
Faculty and professional ethics.....	28
Academic freedom and social media.....	31
Controversial speech.....	32
Criticism.....	35
Academic Freedom.....	36
Major supporting cases.....	38
Social media policies and academic freedom.....	42
American Association of University Professors.....	43
National Labor Relations Board.....	45
Review of Methodological Issues.....	48
Search strategy.....	48
Selection criteria.....	49
Study descriptions.....	49
Methodological considerations.....	50
Synthesis of Research Findings.....	52
Critique of Previous Research.....	53
Chapter 2 Summary.....	54
Chapter 3: Methodology.....	57
Introduction to Chapter Three.....	57
Purpose of the Proposed Study.....	58

Research Questions.....	58
Research Design.....	59
Target Population, Sampling Method, and Related Procedures.....	61
Instrumentation.....	62
Data Collection.....	65
Operationalization and Identification of Variables.....	66
Data Analysis Procedures.....	67
Limitations on the Research Design.....	69
Expected Findings.....	71
Ethical Issues.....	71
Conflict of interest.....	71
Researcher's position.....	71
Ethical issues in proposed study.....	72
Chapter 3 Summary.....	72
Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results.....	74
Introduction.....	74
Description of the Sample.....	75
Characteristics of survey participants.....	76
<i>Gender</i> .....	76
<i>Age</i> .....	76
<i>Ethnicity</i> .....	77
<i>Education</i> .....	78
<i>Employment</i> .....	78

<i>Institution</i> .....	79
<i>Job title</i> .....	79
<i>Open-ended questions</i> .....	80
Summary of the Results.....	80
Statistical tools.....	80
Detailed Analysis.....	81
Research sub-question 1.....	82
<i>Professional usage</i> .....	82
<i>Personal usage</i> .....	83
Research sub-question 2.....	84
<i>Academic freedom</i> .....	84
Research sub-question 3.....	85
<i>Application of legal protections</i> .....	85
Open-ended questions and interview responses.....	86
<i>Personal and professional use of social media</i> .....	86
<i>Academic freedom and social media</i> .....	86
<i>Legal protections of academic freedom</i> .....	87
Ancillary findings.....	87
<i>Value of social media as a tool for communication</i> .....	87
Chapter 4 Summary.....	88
Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion.....	91
Introduction.....	91
Summary of the Results.....	91

Discussion of the Results in Relation to the Literature.....	92
Use of social media.....	92
Academic freedom and social media.....	94
Legal protections of academic freedom.....	95
Limitations.....	97
Implication of the Results for Practice, Policy, and Theory.....	98
Practice.....	99
Policy.....	100
Theory.....	101
Further Study.....	102
Conclusion.....	103
References.....	106
APPENDICES.....	120
APPENDIX A: Introduction Letter to Study Participants.....	121
APPENDIX B: Perceptions of Social Media in Higher Education Survey.....	123
APPENDIX C: Interview Letter, Consent Form, and Questions.....	132
APPENDIX D: Descriptive Statistics.....	137
APPENDIX E: Statement of Original Work.....	142

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1: Simplified postpositivist research cycle.....	12
Figure 2: Conceptual framework.....	15
Figure 3: Venn diagram displaying ethical violations and academic freedom concerns.....	30
Figure 4: The policy creation process.....	42
Figure 5: Summation of AAUP’s social media policy recommendations.....	44

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Percentage of college graduates using social media sites.....	19
Table 2: Percent change in adults using social media.....	19
Table 3: Age distribution of survey participants.....	77
Table 4: Ethnicity distribution of survey participants.....	77
Table 5: Education distribution of survey participants.....	78
Table 6: Education distribution by job title.....	78
Table 7: Employment distribution of survey participants.....	79
Table 8: Institution distribution of survey participants.....	79
Table 9: Job title of survey participants.....	79
Table 10: Cross tabulation of job title and professional use of social media.....	83
Table 11: Cross tabulation of job title and personal use of social media.....	83
Table 12: Cross tabulation of job title and belief academic freedom applies to social media.....	84
Table 13: Cross tabulation of job title and views regarding the legal applications of academic freedom.....	85
Table 14: Cross tabulation of job title and views regarding the value of social media as a tool for communication.....	88

## **Chapter 1: Introduction**

### **Introduction to the Problem**

Since the early 2000s it would appear to the casual observer that social media has been omnipresent (Digital Trends, 2014). Terms such as *friend*, *like*, and *Tweet* have taken on a new meaning in the public lexicon. Though social media might have once been the domain of the isolated technophile, in the modern landscape it is as common to interact with one's friends via social media as it is in person (Boyd & Ellison, 2008; Pomerantz, Hank, & Sugimoto, 2015). However, anytime a new tool to communicate is introduced, there are responsibilities that come along with the convenience. Conversations on social media are unlike those in-person, instead they are frequently conducted in public, recorded for posterity, and easily accessible through a search engine (Ronson, 2015). Institutions and corporations frequently possess a social media profile in an effort to reach a broader audience, however this also exposes them to risk of bad public relations (Jung, Naughton, Tahoun, & Wang, 2015; Pomerantz et al., 2015). The comingling of these two elements of social media—its open, recorded manner and the tendency to be utilized by institutions—present challenges to higher education.

A review of the literature exposes a serious gap in the knowledge base for higher education as to how faculty and administrators may differ in their views of academic freedom as it pertains to social media. Administrators, as the crafters and enforcers of policy, may very well have a differing perspective as to what conduct is allowable compared to faculty. Faculty, having historically pushed for exercising their rights freely and with less administrative oversight, could have a drastically different point of view than administrators (O'Neil, 2011). Clashes over academic freedom, which have gone all the way to the Supreme Court, often decide permissible behavior in higher education through a trickle-down effect on policy (Franke, 2011). Therefore,

the difference in views between administrators and faculty as to how academic freedom applies to social media is vital to the understanding of the present and future of higher education.

There are three basic issues at the core of this study. The first issue is an increase in social media use by higher education faculty members, as noted by Pew Research Center (2015) as well as Dahlstrom and Brooks (2014). The second issue comes from the potential for controversy that has recently plagued social media due to the aforementioned publicity and posterity of interactions (Ronson, 2015). This controversy, when engaged in by higher education faculty, frequently becomes a problem for institutions as well as their administrators (see Chasmar, 2015; Herzog, 2015; Leck, 2015). Understandably, in the event of faculty making a controversial comment, there is frequently call for institutional reaction (see Herzog, 2015; Jaschik, 2015; Leck, 2015). The third issue the study addresses is administrators and faculty members navigating the intricacies of academic freedom as it pertains to the use of social media (O'Neil, 2011, 2015).

Issues surrounding civil liberties, of which academic freedom is one, are always rife with conflicts (Kaplin & Lee, 2014). Past cases surrounding academic freedom have drawn judgements vacillating between favoring the rights of the faculty member to free expression and the right of the institution to protect its reputation and control whom they employ (Areen, 2009; Byrne, 1989). The current viewpoint, a legal precedent established by several cases and known as the *Pickering-Connick-Garcetti* line (Areen, 2009), is generally viewed as being more beneficial to the institutional interpretations of academic freedom, yet organizations such as the American Association of University Professors (AAUP) argue for a more faculty-oriented viewpoint (AAUP, 2014). While larger groups such as the AAUP may express an opinion, individual faculty members may differ in their views. Likewise, administrators may not view their role as protectors of their institution. The intersection of faculty views and administrator-enforced policies lies at the crux of this study.



## **Background, Context, History, and Conceptual Framework for the Problem**

Though the problem at the core of this research study may seem modern, academic freedom has been an issue debated for centuries (Fuchs, 1963). Fuchs (1963) traces the beginnings to early medieval universities and their attempts to engage in intellectual study free from the burden of religious oversight. In the eighteenth and nineteenth century sponsorship of higher education institutions moved from being primarily religious organizations to political entities. While political units—city, state, or country—have proven to be less restrictive, higher education institutions and the academics therein have frequently tested the limits of their freedoms. Much of the modern definitions, trials, and concepts surrounding academic freedom have occurred since 1940 when the American Association of University Professors made their first Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure (AAUP, 1940). Greater detail on the background of academic freedom is found in Chapter 2 of this research study.

Academic freedom, like many legal concepts, changes over time based on a number of factors. The most recent factor, technology, is at the core of this study. The computer age has had a massive impact on virtually all facets of life, and higher education is no exception. Social media has become a common tool used by students, faculty members, and administrators at many institutions (Pew Research Center, 2015). As social media has become integrated into higher education, academic freedom has become a frequent concern for all involved. Many higher education institutions, while having statements on academic freedom, have not updated them to take social media into account (Pomerantz et al., 2015). This challenge argues for the necessity of a greater understanding of how higher education faculty and administrators view social media policies and academic freedom, as well as the differences between the groups.

The conceptual framework utilized in this study involves three key concepts. First, the study was conducted utilizing a postpositivist view (Phillips & Burbules, 2000). This approach

argues that by utilizing the scientific method it is possible to find differences between studied variables. While postpositivism decries the idea of absolute truth, it argues that if an appropriate degree of scientific rigor is applied to the experiment, bias is minimized, and study results can be reproduced, then an idea may be considered true until new data shows otherwise (Phillips & Burbules, 2000).

Second, this study will incorporate historical research about the growth of academic freedom in higher education to elucidate the modern landscape. This study will utilize the comparative-historical methodology as a mechanism for noting historical trends (Mahoney, 2004). The comparative-historical methodology favors a quantitative approach to examining historical problems, and shall be used in this study to provide both a richer understanding of academic freedom as well as to note the historical growth and change of academic freedom and views towards the concept from those within higher education.

Finally, a large part of the conceptual framework of this study is built upon the idea of legal research. Legal research involves finding relevant laws, analyzing their text, and determining the law's application to the problem at hand (Putman & Albright, 2010). Because much of this study revolves around an understanding of academic freedom's legal roots, it is imperative that legal research be employed.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Social media has become integrated into higher education's academic culture, yet many higher education policy statements pertaining to academic freedom have not been updated to take social media into account (Pomerantz et al., 2015). This challenge is compounded because higher education faculty use of social media is increasing (Pew Research Center, 2015). The confluence of these factors increases the potential for controversy in social media usage, as well as making it

difficult for administrators and faculty to navigate the legal intricacies of academic freedom as it pertains to social media.

### **Purpose of the Proposed Study**

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the perceptions of higher education faculty and administrators on social media as it pertains to their right to academic freedom. Rather, as a descriptive study the primary goal was to begin to understand the problem at hand and to initiate a scholarly dialogue about the role social media plays in higher education, how faculty and administrators perceptions may differ or align, and how social media policies can be crafted to protect all involved without infringing on Constitutional rights.

### **Research Questions**

The primary research question driving this study was as follows:

- What impact does the intersectionality of faculty academic freedom and administrators' policies on social media usage have on higher education's function?

The study expanded upon the main research question with the following sub questions:

- What differences exist between higher education faculty and administrators' personal and professional use of social media?
- What is the difference between administrator and faculty views on whether academic freedom applies to social media usage in higher education?
- What do higher education faculty and administrators understand about the legal protections of academic freedom on social media?

### **Rationale, Relevance, and Significance of the Proposed Study**

Social media, while a valuable tool, can be the source of problems when used improperly. While this issue is certainly not exclusive to higher education institutions, only at these institutions do we find the particular protections granted by academic freedom (Areen, 2009). Academic

freedom complicates matters, with some interpretations falling on the side of the institution and others on the side of faculty. Couple that with the fact that fewer than 20% of institutions have clear cut social media policies, and a rationale for this research study is evident (Pomerantz et al., 2015).

The results of this study shall be two-fold. First, higher education administrators and faculty members alike could both gain a better understanding of social media, the dangers and benefits it may pose, and how to responsibly use this tool. Second, this study may open a scholarly discussion of the current interpretation of academic freedom and the need to make clear the rules for social media. The knowledge gained from this study will ideally result in more higher education institutions understanding the legal protections of academic freedom on social media and faculty and administrators being more aware of their social media presence.

### **Nature of the Proposed Study**

The primary tool of this study was a quantitative survey conducted using simple random sampling of higher education faculty and administrators. Qualtrics (2016b) was employed to conduct the survey and gather the sample from their pool of participants. The survey, titled Perceptions of Social Media in Higher Education (PSMHES), consisted of six sections gathering primarily quantitative data on the respondents' usage of social media, views towards social media, understanding of whether academic freedom applies to social media, and the legal protections of academic freedom.

Following the data collection and analysis of the PSMHES, a series of interviews were conducted with both higher education faculty and administrators in an effort to triangulate the results gained from the survey. The goal of these interviews was to better understand the results gained from the survey and possibly expand on any relevant factors which may come to light.

## Definition of Terms

While most of this research study is written in plain language, there are a few terms which warrant brief definitions. For the purposes of this study, the following definitions were used to explain the key research terminology:

- *Academic freedom*—A judicial term of art (a term with a specific legal meaning) used to delineate particular protections higher education students, faculty, administrators, and institutions have under the First Amendment (Areen, 2009).
- *Higher education administrator*—A person responsible for the day-to-day operations of a higher education organization. In terms of this study, the ones frequently responsible for design and implementation of academic freedom policies. Titles may be similar or akin to dean, director, president, or provost.
- *Higher education faculty*—The teaching staff at a college or university. In terms of this study, the ones most likely to enact academic freedom to protect their actions. Titles may be similar or akin to teacher, professor, or instructor.
- *Social networking site*—A web-based platform with public or semi-public profiles created by users who may examine other user's networks and create and share content. Also often referred to as social media sites or simply social media.

## Assumptions, Delimitations, and Limitations

The following assumptions underlie the purposes of this study:

1. It is assumed that respondents have been honest and truthful in reporting their perceptions of social media and academic freedom, usage of social media, and attitudes towards social media and academic freedom.
2. Responses provided have been the result of genuine reflection and thought, representing educated and insightful beliefs.

3. The researcher analyzed all data (both quantitative and qualitative) from an as unbiased perspective as possible.

The following delimitations exist in the study:

1. The sample was delimited to participants who are:
  - a. Actively working in higher education as either a faculty member or administrator
  - b. Have worked (e.g., retired, unemployed) in higher education as either a faculty member or administrator
  - c. Members of a participating Qualtrics panel

Limitations of this study include:

1. Small sample size due to the cost associated with employing Qualtrics
2. Respondent's potential bias in their responses

## **Chapter 1 Summary**

The purpose of this chapter was to introduce the basic concepts of this research study. The background and context of the study were provided to reinforce the necessity for the study as well as clarify the purpose. The research questions this study sought to elucidate were presented and an argument was made for how the study was conducted and the benefits of this methodology. The following two chapters will go into greater detail on the information presented in this introduction.

## **Chapter 2: Literature Review**

### **Introduction to the Literature Review**

Over the last decade, there has been a tidal wave of change in communication and interaction thanks to the impact of social networking sites (SNSs) (Bennett, 2008; Correa, Willard Hinsley, & Gil de Zúñiga, 2010; Macnamara & Zerfass, 2012). From a fledgling tool used primarily by technically savvy individuals, social media has transformed mainstream communication (Gil de Zúñiga, Jung, & Valenzuela, 2012). The use of SNSs is on the rise and it is likely to stay that way (Pew Research Center, 2015).

Social networking has significantly influenced higher education students and faculty (Gikas & Grant, 2013; Manca & Ranieri, 2016). Social networking is omnipresent on the modern college campus (Greenhow, Sonnevend, & Agur, 2016). Student groups, sports teams, and even faculty members use Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram in their daily interactions. Social networking has brought about an unprecedented level of communication and openness, but it has also presented new challenges for administrators and institutional policymakers (Greenhow et al., 2016).

As social networking usage becomes more commonplace, so do the use of these interactive sites between students and faculty (Dahlstrom & Bichsel, 2014; Dahlstrom & Brooks, 2014). This social interaction has led to—and will continue to lead to—ethical issues within higher education institutions. While some ethical violations are clear-cut, there are challenges. Most institutions do not explicitly approve or forbid faculty to use social networking (Pomerantz et al., 2015). Likewise, what rules do exist have often been adapted and applied in an ad hoc manner.

The development of the problem statement for this study was influenced by the scarcity of research surrounding the policy issues concerning academic freedom and faculty use of social media. The problem statement is as follows:

- Social media has become integrated into higher education's academic culture, yet many higher education policy statements pertaining to academic freedom have not been updated to take social media into account (Pomerantz et al., 2015). This challenge is compounded because higher education faculty use of social media is increasing (Pew Research Center, 2015). The confluence of these factors increases the potential for controversy in social media usage, as well as making it difficult for administrators and faculty to navigate the legal intricacies of academic freedom as it pertains to social media.

While research exists on the use of social media by faculty and students, little of this work explores the intersection of free speech by faculty members and institutional policies (Blankenship, 2011; Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2011; Moran, Seaman, & Tinti-Kane, 2011). Even a cursory examination of the topic demonstrates the necessity for research in this area, as faculty members are using this medium and giving their view publicly, which frequently may conflict with institutional policies (Chasmar, 2015; Herzog, 2015; Leck, 2015). Institutions may often find themselves in a precarious situation when faculty members engage in these actions (Elbow, 2015).

Faculty communication and social media interactions are protected under the shield of academic freedom, a special interpretation of First Amendment protections, which specifically apply to the higher education community (O'Neil, 2011). However, cases involving academic freedom often rely on older precedence that, unsurprisingly, makes no mention of digital communication use (Walta, 2014). This has created a situation rife with challenges. For instance, a mere 10% of medical schools in the United States have policies explicitly mentioning social networking and describing what is or is not appropriate social networking behavior (Kind, Genrich, Sodhi, & Chretien, 2010). Couple this with the increasing number of faculty members



utilizing SNSs in their personal and professional lives and the potential for legal issues or misuse escalates (Dahlstrom & Brooks, 2014).

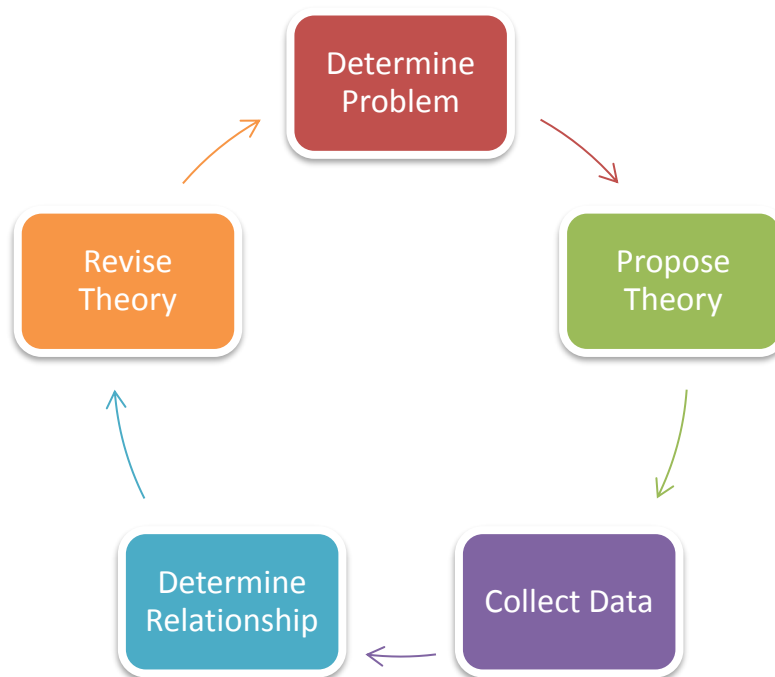
A thorough understanding of all elements involved in institutional social media policies was necessary for this study. For this study, both historic and contemporary social networking usage were examined. How and why faculty members participate in social networking options were examined, as well as the potential ethical lapses and the possible policy issues for higher education institutions. Finally, the concept of academic freedom was analyzed, from past cases to current challenges.

### **Conceptual Framework**

This study utilized a postpositivist approach to answer the research question. Postpositivism is an attempt at improving on the positivist theory attributed to Comte (1848). Comte (1848) ushered in the third stage of philosophy, based around the use of scientific principles (e.g., empiricism, observation). The positivist approach, while undeniably effective when utilized on hard sciences, began to reveal flaws when applied to the social sciences (Phillips & Burbules, 2000). The reaction to these flaws was postpositivism, a methodology primarily designed by Popper to combat the challenges of classical inductivism (Phillips & Burbules, 2000).

Phillips and Burbles (2000) argue that postpositivism, as a philosophy, is built upon several foundational assumptions. First, the idea of absolute truth—as put forth by the inductivist approach to the scientific method—is inherently unprovable. The postpositivist accepts the idea of the null hypothesis, which is to say that only a relationship (or lack thereof) is found between two variables. Knowledge, to the postpositivist, is gained through experimentation. As demonstrated in Figure 1, ideas and research questions are put forth, data is gathered and examined, and assumptions are tested against the objective reality indicated by the data. Through this

experimentation, relationships are determined. Finally, postpositivist researchers serve as objective observers, attempting to acknowledge and minimize all biases in their efforts.



*Figure 1.* Simplified postpositivist research cycle. This figure demonstrates the research cycles graphically as explained by Phillips and Burbles (2000).

Postpositivism was selected as a framework for this study to quantify how faculty members and administrators view the challenges of social media use and institutional policy. Because this study was fundamentally descriptive in nature, a simple yes or no answer will not be the end result. Instead, this study was an attempt to discern relationships and to develop true statements about how faculty members and administrators perceive social media use, academic freedom, and social media policies in their institutions. The scientific method dictates that further testing will be necessary, as this study will likely raise many additional questions that will be of benefit to higher education research (Phillips & Burbules, 2000).

While other methodologies may also have proven acceptable for answering these questions, several factors determined the use of a postpositivist methodology. The primary factor dictating the use of postpositivism was the necessary access to data. This study employed a third-party research firm for data collection, thereby limiting the potential methodological options. According

to Creswell (2009), this research selection criteria eliminated the social constructivist, advocacy, or participatory approaches. While a pragmatic approach was initially considered, the challenges posed due to a lack of real-world access to data excluded this research approach as a valid option. Nevertheless, elements of pragmatism, such as analyzing the historical and social context of research, were adopted to further bolster the study (Creswell, 2009).

The following five arguments were used to build the foundation of this study and to demonstrate the causal chain of reasoning that supports the warrant, or logical justification, to support the study's claim (Machi & McEvoy, 2012).

The arguments used to support this claim are as follows:

1. The use of social networking sites in higher education is on the rise.
2. Faculty and administrators are utilizing social networking sites for informal activities as well as in the classroom.
3. Interaction on social networking sites between students, faculty members, and administrators has the potential for unprofessional and unethical behavior (Bruhn, Zajac, Al-Kazemi, & Prescott, 2002; Moran et al., 2011).
4. Currently, academic freedom policies at many institutions do not refer to social media usage (Kind et al., 2010; O'Neil, 2015).
5. Without a strong social media policy in place, institutions could be held liable for unethical actions.

The conceptual framework of this study is further expanded by incorporating historical research about the evolution of academic freedom, its legal ramifications, and the rise of social media. There are many mechanisms through which historical research can be conducted, however this paper primarily employed the comparative-historical methodology (Mahoney, 2004). While this particular methodology eschews statistics-driven quantitative research, some elements will still

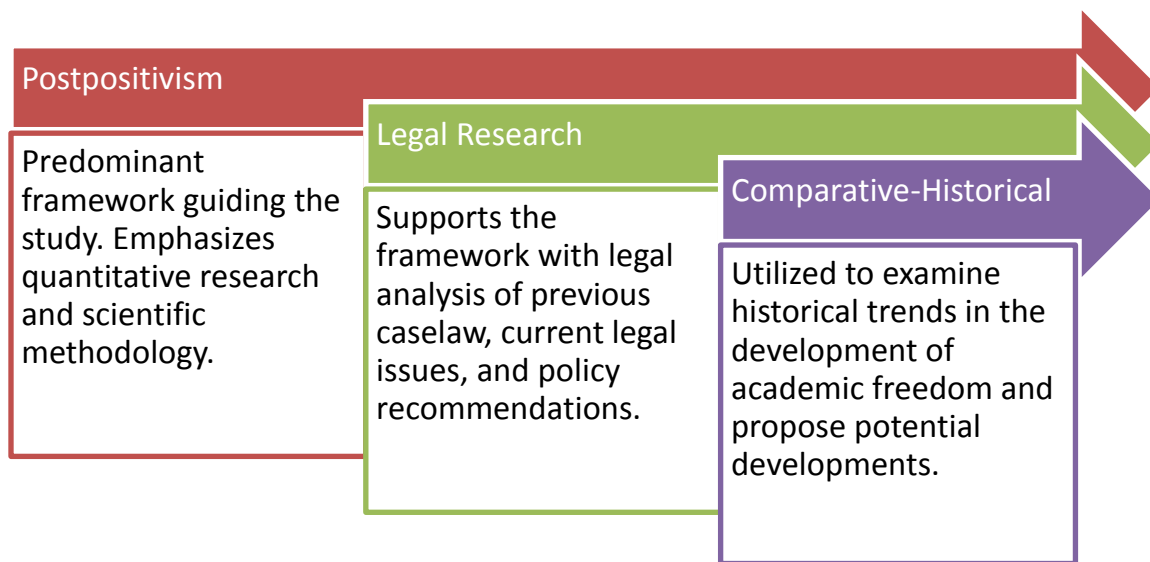
be employed as a mechanism for examining the way historical trends can be used to analyze current institutional policy. Incorporating components of comparative-historical research were included to add further depth to the analysis of the quantitative data through the introduction of past qualitative observations, such as those from legal scholars and academics, who have dealt with prior conflicts surrounding academic freedom (Kaplin & Lee, 2014).

Academic freedom, as a concept, has not evolved to meet the communication challenges of social media (O'Neil, 2015). While the First Amendment protects freedom of speech, and academic freedom protects scholastic speech in particular, there has been a strong blurring of the lines between when faculty members are speaking for themselves and when they are speaking for their institutions. As such, institutions must adopt strong and well-crafted policies regarding the acceptable behavior they expect from their employees who use social media.

This study also relies heavily on aspects of law, in particular the concept of academic freedom (Areen, 2009). Because of the legal aspects of this study, it is necessary to incorporate legal research and analysis as a methodology. Defined simply, legal research is the, “process of finding the law that applies to a...problem” (Putman & Albright, 2010, p. 1). Likewise, legal analysis is, “determining how the law applies to the problem” (Putman & Albright, 2010, p. 1). Therefore, many key aspects of legal research were employed in an effort to both discover and analyze the necessary legal precedent and potential ramifications of academic policy.

As demonstrated in Figure 2, a postpositivist perspective guided the development of this study (Phillips & Burbules, 2000). Because of this viewpoint, the study employed a quantitative survey-based methodology (Creswell, 2009). Additionally, legal research facilitated the development of the study’s survey questions, it aided in interpreting the survey results, and it helped to provide legal policy recommendations. Similarly, comparative-historical theory will assist the readers to comprehend the historical elements of academic freedom’s development, the

development of legal assumptions, and helped to guide the researcher toward policy recommendations.



*Figure 2.* Conceptual framework. Graphic depicting the three major theories guiding the conceptual framework of this study. While postpositivism is the predominant theory, legal research and comparative-historical methodologies provide underlying support.

## **Review of Research Literature and Methodological Literature**

**Social media.** In the modern landscape, it is not difficult to see the influence social networks and social media have on society. Similar to the Internet and email in the 1990s, the new millennium has seen a rise in social networking. In 2015, the average American spends 1.72 hours per day using social networks, making it the top online activity (Mander, 2015). Currently 74% of American adults utilize some form of social networking, making it one of the best ways to disseminate information to large groups of people (Pew Research Center, 2015). When nearly three-quarters of all adults are engaging with some form of technology, the importance of that technology cannot be understated.

The diversity of people taking advantage of social media options online is staggering. Men and women, young and old, poor or wealthy—all of these groups are accessing social media at ever rising rates (Nielsen, 2012). Unsurprisingly, some of the largest corporations in the world have a

strong social media presence, from high-tech Silicon Valley companies to heartland consumer product staples (Qualman, 2011). These companies attempt to take advantage of the more friendly and accessible nature of social media, by advertising and using one-to-one interactions between representatives of the companies and their consumers (Qualman, 2011). Likewise, individuals use social networks to converse, gather new information, and to spread the word about their interactions with a larger group of people (Pew Research Center, 2015; Qualman, 2011). Qualman (2011) has dubbed this ability for virtually anyone to reach large audiences the difference between “word of mouth” and “world of mouth” (p. 3).

Two recent events, both based out of the Middle East, have shown how people use social media to communicate to broad groups of people. A series of social media-driven revolutions that occurred in the Middle East from late-2010 until late-2011 might not have been possible without access to social media (Curtis, 2015; Eltantawy & Wiest, 2011). Millions of ordinary people were able to quickly and easily share information about the actions of despotic rulers in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Bahrain, and Syria (Curtis, 2015). These people used social networks to spread their message when official media channels were blocked, organizing protests, sharing photographs and videos of the aftermath of government actions, and keeping the world informed of their views (Curtis, 2015). However, in much the same manner, the terrorist organization known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) is proving adept at utilizing these same social media strategies to organize and propagate their messages (Stern & Berger, 2015).

**Social networking defined.** With any new form of technology, there is often a struggle to codify and define the parameters of its existence, and social networking is no different. Boyd and Ellison (2008) present one such definition:

Web-based services that allow individuals to (1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system, (2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a

connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system. (p. 211)

While this definition provides a loose framework for defining social networking, two key components are missing. The first of these terms is the confusingly named Web 2.0 (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) explain Web 2.0 as:

A new way in which software developers and end-users started to utilize the World Wide Web...a platform whereby content and applications are no longer created and published by individuals, but instead are continuously modified by all users in a participatory and collaborative fashion. (pp. 60-61)

The authors offer the difference between an online encyclopedia, which is maintained by a company and offers written definitions and terminology, with that of Wikipedia, a user-generated and controlled encyclopedia (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). The challenge to defining Web 2.0 is that there is no set technology or terminology, rather it is utilized as a point of demarcation for when content on the Internet went from being primarily controlled by back-end software developers and content-generators to front-end users generating their own content and sharing it with one another (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010).

The second key component is that of user-generated content, defined by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (2007) as content that is: (1) publically accessible, (2) demonstrates creative effort, and (3) was created outside of professional practice. Utilizing this definition of user-generated content excludes simple communication (e.g., email, instant message), reposting of existing material, and commercial content (Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010; OECD, 2007).

By coalescing definitions from Boyd and Ellison (2008) and Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) a list of traits can be developed to determine social networking for the purposes of this study. Traits that define social networking sites (SNS) are as follows:

1. Web-based platform
2. Public or semi-public profiles
3. Users can examine and traverse other user's networks
4. Users create content
5. Content is shareable between users

While social networking sites may have traits beyond these five, any social networking tool will possess, at a minimum, these five traits.

**History of social networking.** There is some debate as to what constitutes the official beginning of social networking (Boyd & Ellison, 2008; Kaplan & Haenlein, 2010). Some, such as Kaplan and Haenlein (2010), view the beginning of social networking as starting in the late 1970s with the bulletin board system (or BBS), which was primarily composed of computer experts working for universities and particularly ardent enthusiasts. The BBSs of the day, while looking nothing like modern social networking sites, did meet the five traits previously outlined. Users were capable of creating and sharing information, though only in textual format, and could traverse others' networks, however due to the phone system being used they were often restricted to local users to avoid long-distance surcharges (Digital Trends, 2014).

**Social media use in higher education.** The use of SNSs has continued to rise among virtually all demographics for the last decade (Pew Research Center, 2015). Currently 74% of online adults, defined as someone who is over 18 and has access to the Internet, participate in social networking (Pew Research Center, 2015). The percentages scale with age, with 89% of 18-29 year olds participating but only 49% of those over age 65 using these sites (Pew Research Center, 2015).

As shown in Table 1, the Pew Research Center noted a sharp increase between 2013 and 2014 in the use of social networking by college graduates (2015). An average increase of 9.2%



was shown across all sectors of social media for online college graduates from 2013 to 2014 (Pew Research Center, 2015). Logically, given that a requirement for higher education faculty is a college diploma, it can then be inferred social networking use is on the rise among higher education faculty (Pew Research Center, 2015).

Table 1.

*Percentage of College Graduates using Social Media Sites*

Social Media Site	Year		Percent Increase
	2013	2014	
Facebook	68	74	+6%
Twitter	18	30	+12%
Instagram	15	24	+9%
Pinterest	25	32	+7%
LinkedIn	38	50	+12%

*Note.* All data gathered from Pew Research Center (2015).

Similarly, data from the Pew (2015) study indicates that social media usage is increasing in older demographics, as shown in Table 2 (Pew Research Center, 2015). According to Ma (2004), the average age of college faculty members is showing an upwards trend. In 1987 the average

Table 2.

*Percent Change in Adults Using Social Media Between 2013 and 2014*

Age Group	Social Media Site				
	Facebook	Twitter	Instagram	Pinterest	LinkedIn
18-29	3	6	16	7	8
30-49	-6	6	7	4	4
50-64	3	3	5	13	6
65+	11	5	5	8	8

*Note.* All data gathered from Pew Research Center (2015).

higher education faculty member was 47 years old, by 1993 the average age was 48, and in 1998 49.2 (Ma, 2004). These statistics indicate that an argument could be made that social media usage is increasing among higher education faculty.

**Faculty and social networking.** According to a report by Kleiner, Thomas, and Lewis (2007), the major impediment for faculty to adopt social network is a general resistance to change. The author's report that 73% of faculty noted a "lack of interest was an impediment" to the adoption of new technologies (Kleiner et al., 2007, p. 11). This was in stark contrast to their students, few of whom expressed major concerns about integrating new technologies into their lives, personal or professional (Kleiner et al., 2007).

Roblyer, McDaniel, Webb, Herman, and Witty (2010) conducted a study comparing student and faculty perceptions on the use of Facebook. They found far more differences than commonalities. The major similarity was how often faculty and students checked their Facebook, with each group dividing fairly closely into quartiles of frequency (Roblyer et al., 2010). Rather than using Facebook, faculty were far more likely to utilize email as a daily tool of communication (Roblyer et al., 2010). In contrast, the student group used and checked both email and Facebook for daily communication purposes (Roblyer et al., 2010). Faculty were also far more likely to view Facebook as inconvenient for education purposes (Roblyer et al., 2010). The single greatest disagreement was between the view that Facebook is a personal, social site and not meant for education, with 53.2% of faculty agreeing but only 22.5% of students agreeing to this statement (Roblyer et al., 2010).

Integrating technology into the classroom has been an ongoing struggle for many higher education faculty members (Barnett, Keating, Harwook, & Saam, 2004). Frequently the implementation of new technologies in higher education lags behind society, as many faculty members attempt to repeat their own educational experiences, which are often a generation behind

their students (Barnett et al., 2004). Prensky alludes to this challenge when speaking of the “digital native” and the “digital immigrant” (Prensky, 2012, p. 69). Digital natives, or those who have grown up in an era of omnipresent and ever-changing technology, are far more comfortable integrating social networking into their personal, professional, and academic lives (Prensky, 2012, p. 70). Conversely, digital immigrants grew up and were educated in an era when digital tools were far less prevalent, making them far more untrusting and unwilling to utilize such things in their lives (Prensky, 2012). Given that the average age of faculty members in higher education is roughly 50 years old, and modern SNSs can be traced to 1997, the average faculty member has, at best, been using social networking since they were 32 (Boyd & Ellison, 2008; Pew Research Center, 2015). In many higher education institutions, some faculty could be described as digital immigrants (Prensky, 2012).

Given the rise in social networking, it should come as no surprise that faculty in higher education institutions are adapting and using more technological tools. Different SNSs allow for different forms of interaction and not all faculty are using these sites to interact with students (Bart, 2011). However, SNSs have become so engrained in day-to-day life that it is important to understand what sites faculty favor and how they are utilizing them. Much of the following information is drawn from the reports titled *Social Media Usage Trends Among Higher Education Faculty* conducted by Faculty Focus and *Teaching, Learning, and Sharing: How Today's Higher Education Faculty Use Social Media* by Pearson Learning Solutions.

The most popular SNS used by higher education faculty is Facebook (Bart, 2011). As of 2011 84.6% of faculty members surveyed reported that they used Facebook (Bart, 2011). Of those completing the survey (N = 1,372) 44.6% used Facebook on a daily basis, with another 31.1% reporting that they use the site between “a few times per week” to “a few times per month” (Bart, 2011, p. 7).

Of the respondents, 46.1% reported using Facebook for both personal and professional use (Bart, 2011). It is also not entirely uncommon for faculty to friend a student using their Facebook account, which allows the student to see the faculty member's pictures and posts. Faculty respondents indicated that 31.9% friended an undergraduate student, 30.2% friended a graduate student, and 55.4% have friended a student after he or she graduated (Bart, 2011, p. 11).

Bart's (2011) report provides notable statistics, from which conclusions can be drawn. Facebook, the largest social networking site in the world, continues its dominance in the realm of higher education, as the most popular social networking site used by faculty (Bart, 2011; Facebook, 2015). However, faculty members are divided on the use of Facebook in their professional lives, with nearly half utilizing the site for both personal and professional purposes (Bart, 2011). Of those faculty members who do interact with students, one-third of them feel comfortable friending a current student, and more than half have friended a past student (Bart, 2011). This report makes it clear that not only is Facebook a valuable networking and teaching tool for faculty, but it is also a potentially risky one for institutional liability, since faculty are interacting with current students in a personal manner in a public venue.

Unlike Facebook, Twitter has a much lower proliferation rate with higher education faculty. Only 50.2% of the respondents indicated they had an account on the social networking site (Bart, 2011, p. 7). Likewise, respondents indicated they used Twitter far less frequently, with only 16.5% using the site daily (Bart, 2011). It should be noted though, the increase in Twitter usage was steady in the two prior years of reporting, increasing from 30.7% in 2009 to 35.2% in 2010 (Bart, 2011). Twitter usage was primarily mixed between personal and professional use, with only 25% of respondents reporting they used the site for both (Bart, 2011). Despite Twitter's current image as a fairly casual site, multiple respondents mentioned utilizing it as a means to share professional materials or disseminate information to their students (Bart, 2011).

Fundamentally a professional site, LinkedIn is often used for completely different purposes when compared to Facebook and Twitter (Skeels & Grudin, 2009). While 66.7% of respondents reported having an account on LinkedIn, it was the least likely to be used daily at only 6% and least likely to be used for personal communication at 7.3% (Bart, 2011, p. 7). LinkedIn was reported by 42.6% of respondents as being used to maintain a professional network and to share work-related resources, with one respondent reporting that their institution required them to create and maintain an account (Bart, 2011, p. 9).

Although used predominantly to post and share videos, YouTube does meet the requirements of a social networking site as laid out by this study, as well as the definitions provided by Boyd and Ellison (2008) and Kaplan and Haenlein (2010). According to one study, YouTube was the second most popular SNS used by higher education faculty (Moran et al., 2011). Faculty reported using YouTube mostly for non-class professional use, though at a lower frequency than Facebook (Moran et al., 2011).

According to Moran et. al. (2011), 64% of faculty have used content from social networking sites in their courses. Similarly, 30% have posted content on a SNS for their class to view, with 42% mentioning they have assigned students to read or view SNS content (Moran et al., 2011). Only 20% of faculty surveyed have assigned students to post on SNSs as part of a graded assignment (Moran et al., 2011).

By far the most common use of SNSs in classes is online video, with 61% of faculty reporting that they have utilized this feature (Moran et al., 2011). Following online video, faculty use podcasts (13%) and blogs (10%) the most (Moran et al., 2011). Likewise, when asking students to post content to SNSs for class assignments, faculty are most likely to assign online videos (10%), followed by blogs (8%) (Moran et al., 2011). This data indicates that higher education faculties are more likely to utilize online videos from social networking sites, and few

are requiring posted content to these sites. It should be noted that across all measures, faculty who taught online courses were more likely to participate in usage of SNSs and more likely to assign students to view or create content from SNSs (Moran et al., 2011).

In a doctoral dissertation Hank (2011) explored the use of blogging by scholars as a means of preserving, sharing, and enhancing their academic work. The majority of respondents indicated that they viewed their blogging as beneficial to their scholarly pursuits, with most responding that they felt a, “sense of improvement in their teaching, writing, research, and communication with peers” (Hank, 2011, p. 242). Faculty members also indicated that the networking aspect of blogging was beneficial to both their careers and academic work, with many reporting that their blogs led to invitations to publish scholarly work or to present at conferences (Hank, 2011).

In a study by Gu and Widen-Wulff (2011) the use of Web 2.0 tools, and by extension social networking sites, is increasing as a mechanism for educators to engage in communication about scholarship. The majority of the researchers’ respondents (84%) indicated that using SNSs assisted them to collaborate with colleagues in different geographical locations (Gu & Widen-Wulff, 2011). The second greatest use of social networking sites was as a means of disseminating information, with 77% of respondents indicating this as a preferred use (Gu & Widen-Wulff, 2011). Scholars also reported that they appreciated the ability of SNSs to keep them up-to-date on new publications and information relevant to their area of study, though many admitted to being wary of the quality of information due to a lack of scholarly peer review (Gu & Widen-Wulff, 2011).

Similar results were found by Nicholas and Rowlands (2011), who conducted a survey on how scholars integrate social networking into their research processes. They found that scholars are utilizing SNSs at all stages of the research process, from identifying and selecting research problems to publicizing their findings (Nicholas & Rowlands, 2011). The authors also noted that

the majority of social networking usage is on large, well-known sites, such as Twitter, YouTube, and Google Docs (Nicholas & Rowlands, 2011). They also discovered that scholars view SNSs as a compliment to the traditional methods of research, rather than something that will replace their standard methodology (Nicholas & Rowlands, 2011).

Gruzd, Staves, and Wilk (2012) found that when it comes to research, scholars are likely to turn to the traditional SNSs (e.g., Facebook, Twitter) rather quickly. They theorize this is due to the widespread use of these tools in society. This level of saturation makes it logical that academics would seek to utilize the same tools in their professional lives that they use in their personal communication. The authors did find that scholars just entering their field found SNSs particularly useful in working to establish a network of peers, a view not shared by their veteran colleagues. Gruzd et. al. (2012) found results similar to prior studies (Gu & Widen-Wulff, 2011; Nicholas & Rowlands, 2011) concerning scholars' perceptions of SNSs as useful in the research process.

Forkosh-Baruch and HersHKovitz (2012) took a different view of how faculty use social networking sites and studied how institutions used SNSs to publicize scholarly information for their communities. Their study examined Israeli higher education institutions and followed Facebook pages and Twitter accounts maintained by the institutions and attempted to codify what information they were sharing with the public. Forkosh-Baruch and HersHKovitz (2012) identified a few trends common across the Israeli institutions they studied. The average account maintained by the institutions did not frequently post materials, which made them less attractive to users. However, despite many of the accounts exhibiting low posting frequency, they were often maintained over longer periods than other Facebook and Twitter accounts. It also appears that SNSs are a far better tool to interact with the community than official websites, with comments and retweets far more common than the emails received through official channels. The authors

ultimately determined that SNSs maintained by higher education institutions can be beneficial to the dissemination of scientific information to the communities they serve, though further research is needed to determine best practices (Forkosh-Baruch & HersHKovitz, 2012).

Interaction between students and faculty is inevitable, regardless of the communication medium. Pascarella (1980) found that students who had more frequent interaction with faculty members experienced a number of benefits, including superior academic achievement, improved student outlook, and improved personal and intellectual development. Lundberg and Schreiner (2004) compared the quality and frequency of faculty-student interactions and found that these interactions were actually a stronger predictor of learning than student background, a widely acknowledged indicator of potential student success. Pascarella and Terenzini (2005) point out that as informal student interactions with faculty members increase, so too does their academic performance. If faculty-student interaction is so beneficial, what is the problem with interaction between the groups via social networking?

From a student perspective, interaction with faculty on social networking sites is generally unwanted. Research indicates student do not mind faculty utilizing the sites they are also using, but they would prefer it if the interaction was not active (Teclehaimanot & Hickman, 2011). Active interaction, such as liking photos or posts, commenting on student's content, or attempting to friend the student, was viewed by the students as inappropriate (Teclehaimanot & Hickman, 2011). Student gender also matters, since one study revealed that 73% of men found faculty use of Facebook acceptable but only 35% of women felt that it was acceptable (Hewitt & Forte, 2006).

Research on faculty perceptions on interacting with students in social media, although limited, reveals faculty apprehensions. One study found that 75% of the faculty interviewed were concerned about interactions with students, particularly with students viewing them as equals on SNSs (Sturgeon & Walker, 2009). Respondents to Sturgeon and Walker's (2009) survey noted that



Facebook was a double-edged sword, with the open communication and relationship building aspects of a site like Facebook being a potential benefit to students and faculty, but also harboring the possibility of blurring the lines of professional conduct. While faculty and students alike understand the benefits of communication on SNSs, it appears that both are also aware of the dangers (Hewitt & Forte, 2006; Sturgeon & Walker, 2009).

Plew's (2011) research indicates that faculty members were Facebook friends with their students about half of the time. However, three key factors were present in the faculty members who used Facebook and friended their students. They had used the site an average of one year longer than those who did not friend students, they had a higher average number of Facebook friends, and they reported a higher level of understanding concerning the site's privacy settings (Plew, 2011). According to Plew's (2011) findings, faculty who chose not to friend students on Facebook, many claimed that they did not wish to blur the line between personal and professional life while others did not want to be perceived as displaying favoritism.

A reoccurring theme throughout the literature is the necessity for faculty members to view their interactions with students online with the same professionalism they do in person (Bongartz et al., 2011; Moran et al., 2011; Schneider, Jones, Farris, Havrda, & Jackson, 2011). Faculty should not interact with students in a manner that would be considered inappropriate whether they are online or taking a student to a bar (Schneider et al., 2011). Similarly, conversing with students about academic concerns or issues related to their learning is viewed as universally acceptable (Moran et al., 2011). It would appear that, at least when responding to surveys and conversing with researchers, faculty members understand how to set barriers with students and have a clear definition of what is and is not ethical behavior.

**Faculty and professional ethics.** Half a century ago, Greenwood (1957) included ‘college professor’ in his list of professions, which he defined as:

an organized group which is constantly interacting with the society that forms its matrix, which performs its social functions through a network of formal and informal relationships, and which creates its own subculture requiring adjustments to it as a prerequisite for career success (p. 45).

Bruhn, Zajac, Al-Kazemi, and Prescott (2002) argue professions are fundamentally self-policing of their kinds’ behavior. Since the standards of professional conduct are often substantively different from the rules of societal conduct, other professionals are often the best at determining the ethical nature of each other’s actions (Braxton & Bayer, 1999). Self-policing, by its very nature, leads to some challenges. Bruhn et al. (2002) point to the challenge faced when the American Council on Education (ACE) and American Association of University Professors (AAUP) attempted debate the topic of post-tenure review. The conference at which the discussion was taking place fell into disarray, with, “posturing, polarized rhetoric, and a resistance to open self-examination” (Bruhn et al., 2002, p. 463).

Bruhn et al. (2002) argue that the concept of professionalism is an, “interactive process that is continually modified by societal forces” (p. 467) particularly those which act on academia. Society is a continually evolving force, and as society evolves, so too should the members within it (Durkheim, 1957). As professionals, Bruhn et al. (2002) note, the standards for ethics and morality must evolve for higher education faculty. It is necessary for faculty to be constantly reevaluating themselves, each other, their role in higher education, their actions, and their deeds. Without this ongoing process of self-evaluation and self-policing, faculty leave themselves open to external regulations.

In the new digital era, faculty members must understand that there are new ethical challenges. The profession must evolve, along with the understanding of appropriate behavior (Bruhn et al., 2002). Scholars have named those who are participating in this new era ‘digital citizens’ (Mossberger, Tolbert, & McNeal, 2008). Faculty members, the majority of whom are engaging in daily use of Internet resources for personal and professional purposes meet the definition of digital citizenship – the ability to participate in an online society - laid out by Mossberger et al. (2008).

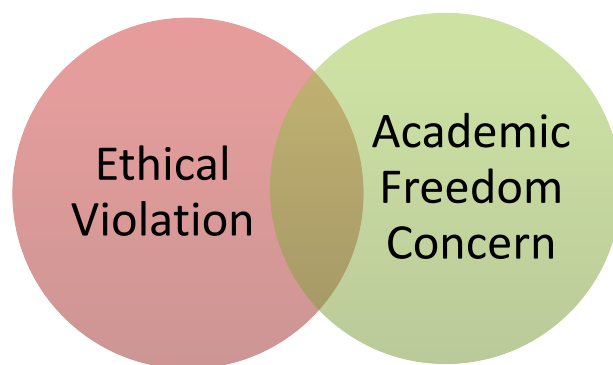
However, digital citizenship does not seem like an adequate descriptor for faculty in the digital age (Mossberger et al., 2008). Faculty members, as professionals, can and should be held to a higher standard of conduct (Bruhn et al., 2002). It follows logically then that faculty should function not just as digital citizens, but as digital professionals (Bruhn et al., 2002; Mossberger et al., 2008). Digital professionalism encompasses a higher standard of conduct than simple citizenry does. Indeed, Bruhn et al. (2002) argue that the title of profession comes with it enhanced rewards in the form of respect and authority, but twin with those rewards is responsibility. Faculty, as digital professionals, should be expected to exhibit greater responsibility for their actions.

Bruhn et al. (2002) further argue for a higher standard of conduct by faculty due to their position within the community and their institutions. Faculty members are in a unique position, having more autonomy than most, including other professionals (Bruhn et al., 2002). They also have access to a number of precious resources, from public and private money to the impressionable young minds of their students. The research conducted by faculty members can exert great influence over their immediate community and the world beyond. One need only look at the example of Andrew Wakefield, a faculty member at the University of Toronto who, after leaving the university, published falsified research linking vaccinations to autism (Smith, 2010). While Wakefield’s conduct was flagrantly unethical, it points to the potential damage faculty can

cause. They can, as Bruhn et al. (2002) note, “contribute to social constructions of “truth” and morality” (p. 471).

With any profession, there are boundaries that exist for protection, both of the professional and those with which they are interacting. Doctors, lawyers, and financiers all practice in fields that are strictly regulated, with loss of licensure or professional membership as a repercussion to ethical violations. Higher education faculty, though similar in their professional standing, lack a licensing bureau to determine firm boundaries to which they must adhere, lest they lose their ability to practice. Some argue these boundaries, which exist in most professions but not higher education, should constitute the definition of a profession (Owen & Zwahr-Castro, 2007). Whether considered professionals or not, higher education faculty have a responsibility to uphold themselves in a manner befitting a professional because they represent their institutions and students.

It is worth noting that not all ethical violations are academic freedom concerns, and the converse is true in that not all academic freedom issues are inherently ethical issues. Many ethical violations are clear, such as taking bribes, fabricating research, or manipulating admissions data. A true debate does not exist over the validity of these exercises, with even the nonprofessional distinguishing these improprieties (Kelley & Chang, 2007). Likewise, many issues surrounding



*Figure 3.* Venn diagram displaying ethical violations and academic freedom concerns.

academic freedom have little to do with ethics. For example, a faculty member expressing a radical view on the state of Israel is more a question of professionalism than ethics (Kelley & Chang, 2007).

An example of the difficulty in determining ethical concerns in academic freedom policies is demonstrated in a discussion by medical faculty about humor. Farnan et al. (2009) point to an ethical challenge posed to higher education members that exists on the fringes of free expression and academic freedom. Medical education, perhaps more so than other types of higher education, is fraught with anxiety, difficult decisions, and high-stress situations. As such, humor is often employed to reduce these tensions, such as end-of-the-year comedy shows which feature students and faculty alike engaging in skits, roasting each other, and making comments concerning their patients (Farnan et al., 2009). However, when such activities reach the public through social media they are rightly met with a degree of uncertainty. The public views medical faculty as having a high degree of professionalism, perhaps higher than traditional faculty as they are members of two distinct professions. Farnan et al. (2009) point to the litany of challenges posed by social media posts, including patients' rights, privacy concerns, ethical concerns, and the role of satire in education. According to Farnan et al. (2009), while training may alleviate some of these problems some medical faculty might still feel the need to test the limits of their right to free speech and academic freedom, in particular.

### **Academic Freedom and Social Media**

It has seemingly become a monthly – if not weekly – exercise for a faculty member of a higher education institution to post something on social media that offends. Fundamentally, this is not a problem. There is no such thing as the right not to be offended. Free expression, established by the First Amendment, protects citizens' right to make such statements, so long as they are not directly threatening (Levinson, 2007). However, it is of great concern to institutions since their

faculty's comments reflect on them and directly affect public opinion. As such, examining some of these issues through the lens of academic freedom will allow for a greater understanding of the interplay between faculty and social media.

**Controversial speech.** It is not new for academics to engage in provocative or scandalous discourse. The history of academic freedom is one of controversial statements, frequently pushing the boundaries of good taste (Byrne, 1989). However, these comments are, more often than not, protected speech (Byrne, 1989). Historically, faculty members are protected, particularly when making comments about their area of study (Levinson, 2007). The real change social media has brought about is the ability for those outside of the academic field to easily gain access to these statements. While two professors might engage in an academic debate about their shared topic of expertise, it is another matter for a professor to Tweet a controversial opinion and then have it 'go viral' and garner media attention. All too often this has become the case, as the following examples demonstrate.

Before even starting her first day as an assistant professor at Boston University, Saida Grundy had already come under fire for some activity on Twitter which others had deemed racially insensitive (Jaschik, 2015). Grundy, who has a PhD in Sociology and Women's Studies, had posted a series of comments on Twitter detailing how she perceived racial relations in America, and college campuses in particular (Jaschik, 2015).

A few of her Tweets stated (spelling and grammar unchanged),

- "Why is white america so reluctant to identify white college males as a problem population?";
- "for the record, NO race outside of europeans had a system that made slavery a \*personhood\* instead of temporary condition";

- “in other words, deal with your white sh\*t, white people. Slavery is a \*YALL\* thing”  
(Marcelo, 2015, p. 1).

When the statements were reported on multiple websites and blogs, a debate began around the appropriateness of Grundy’s comments (Marcelo, 2015). Boston University stood behind their hiring of Grundy, who has since stated that she regrets the Tweets, however university president Robert A. Brown issued a statement condemning the comments while simultaneously defending Grundy’s right to academic freedom (2015).

Inflammatory statements were also made by Professor Steven Salaita, who is a Palestinian-American, when he spoke openly about his feelings on Israel (Mackey, 2014). Salaita had been offered a tenured position at the University of Illinois, but when a number of pro-Israel groups found out about Salaita’s appointment, they began a petition to stop the appointment. Salaita’s Tweets, which were deemed anti-Semitic, included (spelling and grammar unchanged),

- “Let’s cut to the chase: If you’re defending #Israel right now you’re an awful human being”;
- “This is not a conflict between #Israel and “ Hamas”. It is a struggle by an Indigenous people against a colonial power. #Gaza #FreePalestine”;
- “At this point, if Netanyahu appeared on TV with a necklace made from the teeth of Palestinian children, would anybody be surprised? #Gaza” (Mackey, 2014, pp. 1-2)

Following the public attention, the university’s Board of Trustees voted not to approve Salaita’s hiring (Mackey, 2014). The university’s chancellor, Phyllis Wise, wrote on her blog that she felt that while Salaita’s statements were protected by academic freedom, his manner of delivery was considered demeaning and abusive, something the university community would not tolerate (2014). Salaita has since filed a lawsuit against both the university as well as the ‘John

Doe’ donors who he feels exerted their financial influence in an effort to stop his appointment (Flaherty, 2015).

Twitter is not the only controversial site, as Facebook has hosted its share of provocative behavior. In multiple posts on his personal Facebook page, Kaukab Siddique, a tenured professor at Lincoln University, made inflammatory comments about Israel, insulted women who have accused Bill Cosby of sexual assault, and defended the actions of Muslim extremists (Chasmar, 2015). Siddique has repeatedly come under fire for his comments about the “homo lobby” and “dirty Jewish Zionist thugs” while defending Hamas and denying the Holocaust (Cravatts, 2015). Lincoln University has defended Siddique’s right to free speech, while simultaneously criticizing his offensive nature and crude language (Chasmar, 2015).

Universities are not always supportive of their faculty when they make their personal comments and views public. An untenured business professor at St. Lawrence College in Canada was fired after making homophobic comments on his personal Facebook page (Leck, 2015). In response to a video of a Florida mayor raising a gay-pride flag, Coupland commented, “It’s the queers they should be hanging, not the flag...” (Leck, 2015). Screenshots of the comment quickly spread through social media and the administrators at St. Lawrence College were notified. According to St. Lawrence College, Coupland’s comments violated their employee guidelines and were not considered a reflection of their institution’s values (Leck, 2015).

Controversy in academia is commonplace. In order for an area of research to grow, it is sometimes necessary for scholars to put forth radical views or theories. Other scholars then test, debate, and review these theories, subjecting them to scientific and expert scrutiny. In an era before social media, this was of little concern. Those outside of the academic community were not exposed to these thoughts until they had been thoroughly vetted. Likewise, the marketplace for consumption of opinions was more limited, primarily focused only on a handful of journals and



books, frequently only read by those well versed in academic discourse. However, social media has upended this dynamic. Faculty members can now expose their thoughts, feelings, and theories to the world without the benefit of peer referred opinions from their colleagues. While this certainly may have its benefits (e.g., new research questions, large-scale peer review) it also opens up these academics and their institutions to a heightened degree of criticism and negative publicity.

**Criticism.** Academic freedom protects more than faculty's right to put forth radical and potentially offensive material, it also guards the ability for faculty members to openly criticize their institution and its practices without fear of retribution (Byrne, 1989). This is one of many special considerations presented by academic freedom that goes beyond the rights granted to traditional employees. Due to the operational nature of many institutions—primarily shared governance—faculty are often given great liberty when discussing how an institution is run (Franke, 2011). Franke (2011) summarizes the right of faculty to criticize their institution's governance, stating:

Close observers of academic freedom tend to agree that the faculty's participation in guiding the college on academic matters is a component of academic freedom. Faculty should remain free, they argue, to express their professional opinions on issues affecting the academic dimensions of their institutions...professional opinions may include criticism. (pp. 9-10)

The freedom to criticize or to potentially participate in shared institutional governance comes with an an equal amount of responsibility and respectful conduct. Franke (2011) notes that, "the right to offer candid, critical views comes with companion obligations...to respect the opinions of others and not to disrupt campus operation" (p. 10).

One particular instance highlights the challenge in walking the line between academic freedom and institutional disruption. Sara Goldrick-Rab, a Professor of Educational Policy Studies

and Sociology at the University of Wisconsin-Madison (UWM), contacted some students who had recently graduated from a local high school and planned to attend UWM (Herzog, 2015; University of Wisconsin-Madison, 2015). A group of high school students had posted a picture from their graduation and mentioned the official university Twitter account (@UWMadison) as well as adding ‘#FutureBadgers’, an homage to the institution’s mascot (Herzog, 2015). Goldrick-Rab commented on the picture, stating, “I hate to bring bad news but” and then added a link to an opinion article about an ongoing tenure and shared governance debate occurring at the university (Herzog, 2015). The response from students was mixed, with some thanking her for sharing the information and others dismissing her, with one student writing, “No one cares sara”, to which Goldrick-Rab responded, “Oh good. I thought you want a degree of value. Too bad” (Herzog, 2015). The back-and-forth Twitter posts continued, with Goldrick-Rab alluding to faculty who might potentially leave the university (“If this goes through, we are all leaving. No joke.”) and again to the value of a degree from UWM (“We don’t want students 2 waste their \$.”) (Herzog, 2015).

While the university has declined to discipline Goldrick-Rab, this instance shows many of the challenges for academic institutions concerning academic freedom and social media (Elbow, 2015). While academic freedom protects the right of professors to criticize their institutions, should it protect them when they are directly interfering with the recruiting efforts of the university? Does academic freedom protect interactions between faculty and students who have yet to officially enroll? Does the use of social media as a tool change the protections of academic freedom? These questions, and countless others, are raised by ways faculty members are utilizing social media.

**Academic freedom.** Fundamentally, academic freedom as a concept does not exist in the traditional sense of rights (Byrne, 1989). Academic freedom is not mentioned in the Constitution,

the Bill of Rights, Magna Carta, or any other seminal document outlining the basic human rights in a free and democratic society (Levinson, 2007). Rather, academic freedom is a ‘special concern’ of the First Amendment, defining particular interpretations that have been made in cases that have established academic freedom as a right (Areen, 2009; Byrne, 1989).

Complicating matters, academic freedom can be viewed in two different ways. First, academic freedom is a particular interpretation of the First Amendment, protecting university faculty and students in their expression from undue interference (Kaplin & Lee, 2014). This type of academic freedom is protected by the rights outlined in the First Amendment, particularly the right to free expression (Kaplin & Lee, 2014). A second use of the phrase exists in the non-legal realm, “referring to the liberties claimed by professors through professional channels against administrative or political interference with research, teaching, and governance” (Byrne, 1989, p. 255). For the purposes of this study, academic freedom refers to the legally recognized protections granted to university faculty, students, and institutions.

Byrne (1989) explains one of the main challenges presented by academic freedom in this way:

American law operates on an impoverished understanding of the unique and complex functions performed by our universities. All too often, courts fail to recognize that universities are fundamentally different from business corporations, government agencies, or churches. Concepts and categories developed in the law to regulate these institutions are applied to university problems with varying degrees of awareness that square pegs are being pressed into round holes. Our universities require legal provisions tailored to their own goals and problems. (p. 251)

In this quote, Byrne demonstrates a major impediment to understanding academic freedom. The difficulty many have in grasping the concept comes from an understanding of free expression

that is based in a non-academic freedom mentality. Faculty members in higher education are given greater latitude in their speech and expression than traditional employees in business or nonprofit organizations. This is necessary, as Justice Frankfurter wrote, “to provide that atmosphere which is most conducive to speculation, experiment and creation” (*Sweezy v. New Hampshire*, 1957, p. 263). Sometimes faculty members will engage in teaching methods, research, or publishing that pushes the boundaries of good taste and free expression. Academic freedom supports these qualities to protect the greater culture of inquiry and thought in higher education.

**Major supporting cases.** The beginning of legally defined academic freedom stem from the case of *Sweezy v. New Hampshire* (1957), in which a professor refused to answer questions from the state attorney general about the content of a lecture. The Supreme Court reversed a charge of contempt against the professor and Justice Frankfurter supported this decision with the now famous “four essential freedoms” for universities (Byrne, 2006). These freedoms are the ability for an institution, “to determine for itself on academic grounds who may teach, what may be taught, how it shall be taught, and who may be admitted to study” (*Sweezy v. New Hampshire*, 1957, p. 263). These four freedoms form the bedrock on which academic freedom stands.

Two particular cases have based their support for academic freedom on protections guaranteed in the Constitution (Kaplin & Lee, 2014). *Shelton v. Tucker* (1960), a trial conducted during the height of Cold War era anti-Communism sentiment, saw the Court invalidate a statute that required all public school and college teachers to reveal their affiliations with organizations for the previous five years. The Court found that public schools, rather than being exempt from these protections to ensure safety of students, should be seen as a bastion of Constitutional protection and the statute would have a chilling effect on the freedom of association (Kaplin & Lee, 2014). In the opinion of the second case, *Griswold v. Connecticut* (1965), Justice Douglas stated:

The right of freedom of speech and press includes not only the right to utter or to print, but the right to distribute, the right to receive, the right to read and freedom of inquiry, freedom of thought, and freedom to teach – indeed, the freedom of the entire university community (p. 482).

This statement is vital, as it can be interpreted to grant institutions and their members the implied right to academic freedom.

The final case that helped to form the foundation of academic freedom is *Keyishian v. Board of Regents* (1965). The core of the *Keyishian* case was the State University of New York trying to make their professors sign a pledge indicating they were not, and never had been, Communists (1965). The Court not only ruled this was a violation of the faculty members' First Amendment freedom of association, but further emphasized the necessity for the university to be an enclave of free thought, speech, and association, even if this occasionally verged on what could be considered sedition (Areen, 2009).

The next major step in academic freedom for faculty came from two important cases: *Pickering* and *Connick* (Kaplin & Lee, 2014). These cases established the first test that could be applied to academic freedom. *Pickering v. Board of Education* (1967) concerned a public high school teacher who had written a letter to the local newspaper that was critical of the financial plans put forth by the Board of Education. Pickering was dismissed for this action and he sued the Board of Education alleging a violation of the First Amendment's freedom of speech (1967). The case went to the Supreme Court, with the Court deciding in favor of Pickering (1967). The vital element in the decision was whether or not Pickering's comments were a matter of "legitimate public concern" (Areen, 2009, p. 974). To decide a legitimate public concern the Court must consider where the speech was directed, difficulties the speech may create, whether or not it would impede the performance of the speaker and those around them, and if it would interfere with the

operation of the school (Areen, 2009). The Court then must weigh this interference of institutional operation against the speaker's right to free speech, with exceptions being made for false or reckless statements (Areen, 2009).

The public concern test was further expanded in *Connick v. Myers* (1983), which concerned a public employee's communication with fellow office staff members about employment matters. The plaintiff, Myers, opposed being transferred and sent out a questionnaire to her fellow employees about office operations which resulted in her dismissal (1983). Myers argued that her free speech had been violated, and the Court attempted to determine whether she was speaking on a public concern or private matter, ultimately deciding on the latter (*Connick v. Myers*, 1983). The distinction for the test of public versus private speech was based on the, "content, form and context of a given statement," meaning that no hard and fast rule could be decided (*Connick v. Myers*, 1983, p. 148). The Court later added, in *City of San Diego v. Roe* (2004), that something which is the subject of legitimate news interest may be a test for public concern.

Quite likely the most important case regarding faculty academic freedom was *Garcetti v. Ceballos* (2006). Decided by the Supreme Court in 2006, *Garcetti* again focused on the freedom of expression by public employees and the limits their organizations could place on their speech. The Court had to decide what protections should be granted to an individual when speaking as a public employee and what protections they are granted when speaking as private citizens (*Garcetti v. Ceballos*, 2006). In contrast to previous decisions, the Court decided that when acting as a public employee the speech protections of an individual are limited, remarking, "when public employees make statements pursuant to their official duties, the employees are not speaking as citizens for First Amendment purposes, and the Constitution does not insulate their communications from employer discipline" (*Garcetti v. Ceballos*, 2006, p. 421). Public organizations are now able to restrict aspects of their employees' speech without it being considered a violation of their liberty.

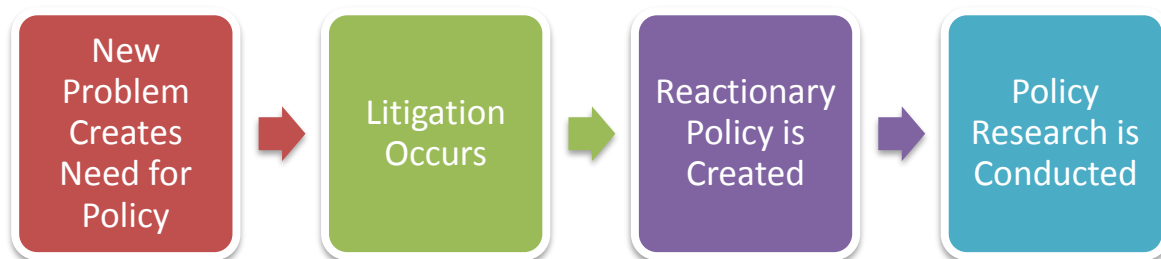
What has become known as the *Pickering-Connick-Garcetti* line of academic freedom has developed a few foundational tests to determine whether academic freedom applies to an issue (Areen, 2009). The modern test, as found in *Garcetti*, is whether the individual is speaking as an employee. If so, their speech is not fundamentally protected and the public or private concern as found in *Pickering* and *Connick* is irrelevant (Areen, 2009). This modern test can be seen as more restrictive than the previous one. Prior to *Garcetti*, the test was whether the speech was of public or private concern. Now the standard for protecting speech is harder to meet, with many types of speech made by public employees in official duties considered unprotected speech (Areen, 2009).

The question, posed by the Court in *Garcetti* (2006), was whether or not this argument applies to faculty members of public institutions. The Court was divided, with Justice Kennedy writing in the majority opinion that this decision was beyond the scope of *Garcetti* and opting not to speak on it (*Garcetti v. Cebbalos*, 2006). Justice Souter, in the dissenting opinion, saw the danger in applying the *Garcetti* standard to public institution faculty, as virtually all their speech and writing could be considered an “official duty” and therefore exempt from protection (*Garcetti v. Ceballos*, 2006). The lack of a clear statement from the bench has muddied the waters of academic freedom for faculty members and future cases will most likely shift opinions either for or against faculty freedoms.

Several cases have established limits to the *Pickering* and *Connick* decisions (Kaplin & Lee, 2014). Notably, in *Harrington v. Harris* (1997) the Court found that for the court to apply the *Pickering-Connick* test of public concern the employee must show they had suffered an adverse employment action. Three years later, however, the ruling of *Power v. Summers* (2000) found that there was no need to demonstrate adverse employment action for a claim of free speech. In *United States v. National Treasury Employees Union* (1995) the Court established a further test on whether or not to apply the *Pickering-Connick* line. According to the Supreme Court, the

*Pickering-Connick* line could only be applied when there is a *post hoc* restriction of the employee's free speech (Kaplin & Lee, 2014). In the event of a regulation or statute seeking to limit free speech the Court utilizes a greater burden of proof due to the "chilling effect" of such a widespread rule (Kaplin & Lee, 2014).

**Social media policies and academic freedom.** There is a paucity of research on how social media policies are formulated and what role academic freedom plays in these policies. This is likely due to a number of factors. Foremost is the relatively new nature of social media, which has only existed for, at most, 20 years (Boyd & Ellison, 2008). Institutional inertia is a major challenge, with many universities and colleges prone to reactive, rather than proactive, policy construction (Bertot, Jaeger, & Hansen, 2012). Likewise, O'Neil notes the tendency for higher education policy to follow litigation, rather than preempt it (O'Neil, 2015). This creates a system whereby researching effective policy occurs well after the necessity for that policy to exist, as shown in Figure 6.



*Figure 4.* The policy creation process. The flawed higher education policy creation process depicted graphically, based on O'Neil (2015).

Social media policy has already fallen victim to this process. Nevertheless, it is in the best interest of higher education that quality research be conducted to determine how faculty and administrators view social media policy and to decide what constitutes an effective social media policy.



Two main groups have issued extensive advice on what necessitates a quality social media policy and what can and cannot be included. Each of these reports were covered in an attempt to further explore what constitutes a quality social media policy.

***American Association of University Professors.*** The American Association of University Professors (AAUP) is both a professional association and a union that primarily represents the interests of higher education faculty members (AAUP, 2015). The AAUP has issued three reports on the subject of academic freedom (2014). The latest report, concluded in 2013, was conducted in an effort to specifically understand the interplay between academic freedom and social media.

The report reiterated the AAUP's long-held opinion on academic freedom:

Academic freedom, free inquiry, and freedom of expression within the academic community may be limited to no greater extent in electronic format than they are in print, save for the most unusual situation where the very nature of the medium itself might warrant unusual restrictions. (AAUP, 2014, p. 42)

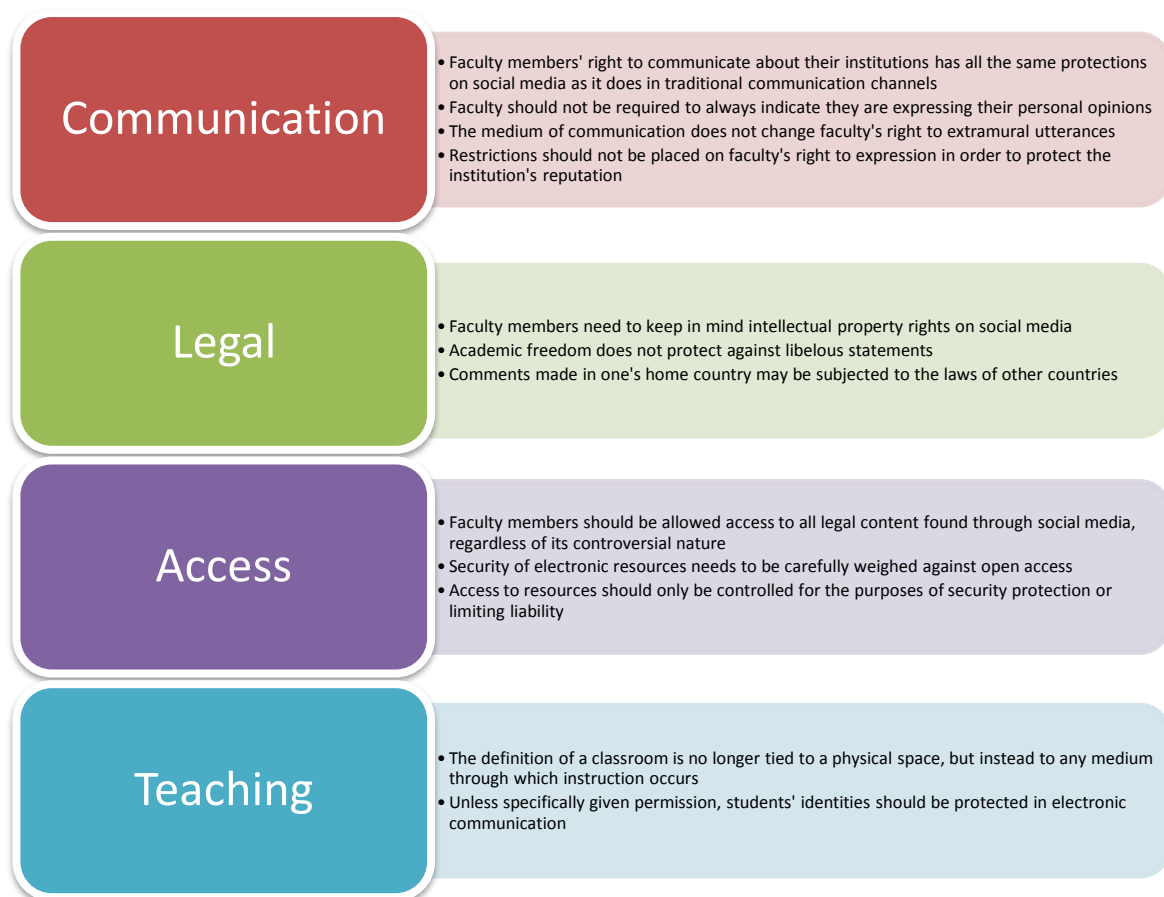
In this report, the AAUP argues for virtually no restriction on faculty usage of social media (AAUP, 2014). They are, however, willing to concede that in some instances it may be necessary to make small concessions in academic freedom for specific purposes, particularly privacy and protection of intellectual property rights (AAUP, 2014). These limitations, however, should be, "narrowly defined and clearly and precisely stated in writing" (AAUP, 2014, p. 48).

While making a case for unfettered academic freedom, the AAUP does realize that institutions need to have sound social media policies to protect, rather than restrict, their faculty's right to free expression (AAUP, 2014). As such, several policy recommendations can be gleaned from their report, shown in Figure 5.

Of particular note for social media is the concept of extramural utterances, which are statements made outside the confines of the faculty's institution (Byrne, 1989). A core element of

the AAUP’s view of academic freedom is that extramural utterances are protected speech and should not reflect on the faculty member’s abilities as a teacher and scholar (AAUP, 1989). This protection is what protects faculty members who make controversial comments through social media, even if those comments are offensive.

The AAUP has also been unwilling to make a distinction between the, “regulation of the content of speech and the regulation of the manner (or style) of speech” (AAUP, 1994, p. 1). The only concession the AAUP has made on extramural utterances is that they can be grounds for dismissal if they, “clearly demonstrate the faculty member’s unfitness to serve” (AAUP, 1989).



*Figure 5.* Summation of AAUP’s social media policy recommendations. Data organized graphically from text of “Academic Freedom and Electronic Communications” (2014).

Even in this case, it would be unlikely that extramural utterances alone would provide sufficient evidence of a faculty member’s ability to function in their profession.

***National Labor Relations Board.*** The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) is a federal agency created for the purposes of overseeing, investigating, and resolving unfair labor practices (NLRB, 2015). While the NLRB is primarily responsible for working with private sector employees and unions, their legal decisions frequently mirror or influence public sector verdicts and policy, as well as influencing non-labor employment practices (Milito, 2014). The NLRB has also made multiple rulings involving the AAUP, demonstrating their influence over higher education institutions (R. Diamond, personal communication, August 7, 2015). The NLRB has shaped policy for much of the last century, making its decisions a key to what may stand in a social media policy.

While the NLRB makes statements and rulings on many different aspects of the law, in 2012 a report was issued specifically on the subject of the legality of social media policies (Purcell, 2012). The report was deemed necessary due to the rise in social media usage by employees, coupled with the lack of social media policies and employer's attempts to adapt existing policy to social media (Purcell, 2012). In the report, the general counsel of the NLRB touches on seven specific instances in which social media policies or sections of social media policies were found to be illegal. Inferences can be drawn about quality social media policies in higher education from these examples.

Two of the cases discussed revolve around Section 7 of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA), which, though succinct in the Act itself, has been expanded upon greatly by NLRB decisions and case law (Fischl, 1989). Section 7 rights protect not only the ability for employees to engage in labor organization, but also employees' right to speech when discussing the terms of their employment (Fischl, 1989). Purcell (2012) found unlawful the social media section of one employer's handbook that stated, "Don't release confidential guest, team member or company information" (p. 4). This was due to the potential interpretation that this would limit an employee's

right to discuss terms and conditions of their employment, which is a clear violation of the NLRA (Fischl, 1989). Purcell (2012) also found that social media policies cannot attempt to prohibit disclosure of confidential information between coworkers in “public places” (p. 5), such as social media. Policies attempting to restrict such speech were judged to be overbroad and in violation of Section 7 of the NLRA.

A second employer’s social media policy was found to violate Section 7 due to rules attempting to regulate employees sharing information and incorporating the employer’s logo and trademarks in their posts (Purcell, 2012). The handbook stated employees must be sure their posts are, “completely accurate and not misleading and that they do not reveal non-public information on any public site” (Purcell, 2012, p. 6). This policy was regarded as overly broad as an employee could reasonably believe this prohibited them from discussing their employer’s labor policies, including the social media policy itself. Likewise, the concept of “non-public information” could be seen as including information about wages, benefits, and terms of employment, all protected by Section 7 (Purcell, 2012). It was also found that, although employers have an interest in protecting the value of their intellectual property (e.g., logo, trademarks), the employee’s right to free expression is on an equal footing, therefore the company cannot restrict the “employees’ non-commercial use of the Employer’s logo or trademarks” (Purcell, 2012, p. 7).

These two cases help to demonstrate the limits of how an employer can regulate their employees’ actions on social media. Social media policies in higher education are held to, at a minimum, the same standard as traditional employer policies. As such, social media policies cannot attempt to regulate faculty members’ speech about their working conditions, terms of employment, coworkers, wages, or benefits (Fischl, 1989). Social media policies in higher education should also not try to dissuade faculty from using any pictures, logos, or trademarks of their institution in their social media postings, as this could potentially be unlawful.

Several other cases also serve to establish guidelines for what can be included in social media policies. Employers cannot restrict employees' ability to discuss legal matters, particularly pending litigation (Purcell, 2012). They also should not attempt to make rules restricting the tone of online interactions, as conversations or postings about a number of protected types of speech (e.g., religion, unionizing) have a high likelihood of developing into unprofessional behavior (Purcell, 2012). Employees cannot be prevented from airing grievances or concerns about fellow employees, supervisors, or working conditions to social media, however it can be suggested that these comments be directed toward internal procedures (Purcell, 2012).

Purcell (2012) additionally points out several other elements of social media policies that violate employees' rights. Employers must be very careful as to how they phrase their policies when attempting to restrict employees' ability to speak about their employers. An example found to be in violation of the NLRA used the phrases "material non-public information" and "confidential or proprietary" concerning what employees could not post on social media (Purcell, 2012, pp. 12-13). In the event these phrases are used, they must be clarified and include a list of what information is considered "material non-public information" and "confidential or proprietary", and these items must not violate NLRA policies (Purcell, 2012). It is also unlawful to attempt to prevent employees from criticizing elements of their workplace, including fellow employees, work conditions, actions of management, and policies (Purcell, 2012). In addition, employers cannot restrict the ability for their employees to interact with third parties, particularly the NLRB or a labor union, without specific cause, principally privacy concerns (Purcell, 2012).

Finally, employers are not protected from violating the National Labor Relations Act by putting what is known as a "savings clause" in their policies (Purcell, 2012). A savings clause is a disclaimer which says, in essence, that regardless of what is stated in the aforementioned policies that employees still have all their rights under the law (Fischl, 1989). The majority of these clauses

do not protect an institution from legal action (R. Diamond, personal communication, August 7, 2015).

## **Review of Methodological Issues**

**Search strategy.** Research was conducted primarily utilizing the online databases available through Concordia University – Portland’s George R. White Library. While a multitude of different databases were accessed, four specific databases were used to locate the majority of the research—ERIC, Education Source, LexisNexis, and JSTOR. Additional articles were located in other databases as the necessary, but these represent a comparatively small amount of the literature reviewed.

A large number of search terms were employed to ensure the maximum return of relevant research. This includes many permutations of the following phrases: social media, social networking, faculty use, administrative use, ethics, controversy, academic freedom, and history. Many of these search terms were paired with Boolean operators (e.g., and, or) in an effort to return pertinent literature. An example of a search would be “faculty use” and “social networking”. This strategy was employed to avoid returning unwanted research, such as social networking use for business purposes or ethical concerns surrounding childcare.

Numerous Internet resources were also utilized. *GoogleScholar* was accessed as a mechanism for cross-referencing citations, obtaining DOI information, and determining exemplar research articles, defined here as articles that have been cited by more than 100 other researchers. Google searches were conducted at regular intervals in order to find information on ongoing social networking-based challenges to academic freedom, particularly those laid out in the section titled Academic Freedom and Social Media. Data was gathered from the webpages of a number of organizations, including the AAUP, EDUCAUSE, the National Labor Relations Board, and the Pew Research Center.

**Selection criteria.** Papers were examined based on three main factors: relevance, publication date, and quality of data. The search process excluded the majority of irrelevant articles. However, student use of social media being included in studies was an ongoing area of concern. While the majority of these studies were excluded, some presented valuable and relevant information on faculty and institutional use of social media and were incorporated. Publication date was made an important factor due to the relatively recent emergence of social networking as a tool. Best efforts were made to utilize data from the last 10 years (2005-2015). Data quality should be a concern in all studies, however given the paucity of reports available on this subject it was necessary to include work that either had small sample sizes, has not been replicated, or was ongoing. Additionally, while much of the research in this literature review relied heavily on qualitative methodology, every effort was made to include high-quality quantitative research when possible.

**Study descriptions.** Research for this literature review represented two approaches. The first methodology was primarily quantitative, featuring descriptive statistics of trends and usage. These studies focused on many factors. Some were descriptive, describing the demographic information of social media users, what they used social media for, and their frequency of access. Others focused on how social media was utilized as a tool specifically for learning, arguing for its ongoing use and the necessity for proper social media policies. However, the scarceness of quantitative data surrounding how faculty members and higher education institutions use SNSs demonstrated a large gap in the literature.

Alternately, much of the research utilized in this review is qualitative, drawn from expert opinion, case law, and historical information surrounding the development of social media and academic freedom. Frequently these areas overlapped. Experts, for example, often interpret case law. Such is the example with information obtained from the NLRB, which featured reports from

the organization's General Counsel on what constitutes legal limits on employee's use of social media (Purcell, 2012). Likewise, history is often used as a measuring stick against which modern trends are gauged. This can be seen by charting the ongoing developments of academic freedom, which has evolved since its formal recognition in the United States in 1957, with the case of *Sweezy v. New Hampshire*. By examining these historical trends through a qualitative lens, it may be possible to forecast future developments.

**Methodological considerations.** When viewing the research contained in the literature review it is important to keep four issues in mind. The issues are: (a) the challenges in self-reporting; (b) the lack of quality data; (c) researcher bias; and (d) ethical disagreements.

The first issue comes from the tendency for both quantitative and qualitative research on social media usage to rely heavily on self-reported data. There are several limitations with self-reported data, such as an unwillingness to provide private information, a tendency for respondents to provide desired information, and a respondents' mood influencing their responses (B. Johnson & Christensen, 2012). While quantitative research can report concurrent validity, qualitative research relies primarily on the researcher and participant relationship to determine such flaws.

Second, there is both paradoxically too much and too little data available on social media. When examining social media content, the amount of information available can be overwhelming. For example, Twitter reports that there are 500 million Tweets sent out every day (2015). The amount of information produced is colossal, even when it is winnowed down using hashtags or computer-aided data gathering tools. Conversely, on this particular issue there is a lack of data available surrounding higher education faculty use of SNSs and academic freedom, and as of this date, virtually no research has been conducted on this issue. For instance, it has not been quantified how many times the average faculty member posts to a SNS on a daily basis or what percentage of those messages they feel would fall under academic freedom protections. There is also little data



on administrative perspectives on the faculty use of social media, such as their beliefs on whether faculty messages represent their institutions or if faculty messages should be related to their ongoing employment.

Third, an ongoing concern for all research is the potential for researcher bias to interfere with the results. Quantitative research presents a number of bias concerns – confounding variables, mistaking correlation for causation, to name a few—but the challenge in this literature review was predominantly quantitative bias (B. Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Multiple studies were rejected for inclusion due to observable biases on part of the researchers. Two reoccurring issues encountered were low reliability and a lack of effort on part of researchers to address contradictory evidence (Mays & Pope, 1995). Little of the research conducted on academic freedom and social media included bolstering quantitative data, repeated analysis, or outside observation. Few sought out contradictory opinions or explanations for their findings, even fewer offered multiple explanatory theories. Much of the qualitative research conducted in the field of education appears to continue to need improvement from a methodological standpoint. This echoes the concerns voiced more than 25 years ago by Hall, Ward, and Comer (1988) regarding the generally low quality research conducted by education professionals.

Finally, a major consideration anytime the concepts of ethics, professionalism, or acceptable behavior are mentioned is the differing beliefs and norms encountered. Millennia have been spent debating differing ethical philosophies, man's role in the world, the social contract, and what constitutes acceptable behavior. All of these arguments go well beyond the scope of this study. However, it is important to note that what one person, culture, or society considers acceptable or ethical may be abhorrent to another. This means that it is important to view literature reviewed in this document as being representative of the context and society in which it was conducted.

## **Synthesis of Research Findings**

A thorough review of the literature elucidates four main themes: (a) social networking is here to stay; (b) social networking provides benefits to faculty members when incorporated into their daily activities; (c) administrators and faculty are struggling with how to incorporate concepts of academic freedom into social networking usage; and (d) policies need to be adapted to meet the new challenges presented by social networking.

The first theme that emerges is the rising use of SNSs in higher education (Pew Research Center, 2015). While Pew Research Data supports the rise in SNS use among virtually all demographics, it is important to note that two of the largest increases came in demographics to which most faculty members belong: college graduates and people over the age of 50 (Ma, 2004; Pew Research Center, 2015). From this data two logical inferences can be drawn. First, higher education faculty members almost exclusively hold college diplomas, with most being educated to the master's or doctoral level. Second, trends extrapolated from demographic data show that the average faculty member is now over the age of 50 (Ma, 2004). Combining these two arguments points to an almost certain contention that higher education faculty are accessing SNSs at ever increasing rates.

The second theme in the literature demonstrates the value of social networking for faculty members in a number of different ways. More than half of all faculty members utilize SNSs for professional purposes, primarily LinkedIn, but a large amount maintain a professional network on Facebook, as well (Bart, 2011). Research also demonstrates that some are using SNSs as a mechanism for exploring, conducting, and crowdsourcing their research practices (Gruzd et al., 2012; Nicholas & Rowlands, 2011). Similarly, faculty and institutions alike have had success in sharing the results of their research with their community via SNSs (Forkosh-Baruch & HersHKovitz, 2012). Faculty are also employing SNSs as a mechanism to archive their scholarly

works and interact with colleagues from distant institutions (Gu & Widen-Wulff, 2011; Hank, 2011). Faculty appear to appreciate many of the key qualities of SNSs and, as demographics shift and more faculty members use social networking, they will likely only increase in value.

Third, it appears there is an ongoing struggle between faculty members, institutions, and the public about how faculty should exercise their free speech on social media. It is certainly not unusual in the history of academic freedom for faculty members to engage in speech that challenges the limits of good taste or decency, yet it has been proven time and again to be protected (Byrne, 1989; O'Neil, 2011). Nevertheless, when a faculty member makes a controversial statement on an SNS it is frequently met with outrage from the public and calls for their dismissal (Chasmar, 2015; Jaschik, 2015; Leck, 2015; Mackey, 2014). Administrators are then put in a delicate situation, attempting to distance themselves from their faculty member's comments while simultaneously protecting their rights.

Fourth, it is clear that policies need to be adapted or created with social networking use in mind, particularly those policies surrounding academic freedom and acceptable behavior. A major challenge for many institutions is a tendency to react to problems, rather than demonstrate proactive policy changes (O'Neil, 2015). Both the AAUP and the NLRB have created extensive reports on what can and cannot be included in social media policies (AAUP, 2014; Purcell, 2012). A strong argument can be made that by engaging in preemptory research to discern what makes for the strongest, most effective social media policies, institutions can limit liability and faculty members can have the best understanding of their rights and responsibilities.

### **Critique of Previous Research**

The primary critique concerning previous research is its scarcity. A great deal of research exists surrounding social networking sites in many forms, from their use as educational tools to their strategies for corporate branding. Research also exists on the fringe of this topic, including

how faculty members utilize SNSs to advance their careers, views on faculty-student interactions on SNSs, and demographic research on SNS usage (Bart, 2011; Moran et al., 2011). Academic freedom is also a topic of frequent research, often analyzing historical precedent or offering expert opinions on interpretations of case law (Areen, 2009; O'Neil, 2015). However, how faculty and administrators perceive academic freedom as it relates to social media is a topic that, despite frequently making headlines, receives little notice from the educational research community. This is surprising, given the potential influence such research could have on policy, faculty rights, and institutional liability.

A secondary challenge comes from the potentially biased nature in covering academic freedom, an issue of political and legal significance. Much of the talk of academic freedom comes from those who have a vested interest, namely faculty members or governmental groups. Faculty members, regardless of the source of funding for their research, stand to benefit by expanding the protections guaranteed from academic freedom. This is noticeable in the AAUP's multiple reports concerning the issue (1994, 2014). Understandably, they propose an almost complete lack of restriction on academic freedom. In a similar manner, the NLRB's interpretation of restrictions which can be placed on employee speech through policy is also almost exclusively in favor of fewer restrictions (Purcell, 2012). This is not to say that these group's opinions should be discounted, merely that the predominance of coverage on academic freedom comes from sources that have a stake in protecting the right.

## **Chapter 2 Summary**

This chapter's purpose was to research the relevant literature for a dissertation. This was done in multiple ways. First, the following problem statement was identified:

- Faculty use of social media challenges the existing definition and understanding of academic freedom, thereby creating a problem in formulating institutional policies.

Following the identification of a problem statement, a conceptual framework was formulated in an attempt to develop a theoretical structure for the study. From this conceptual framework, a key research question was proposed:

- What impact does the intersectionality of faculty academic freedom and administrators' policies on social media usage have on higher education's function?

The study will expand upon the main research question with the following sub questions:

- What differences exist between higher education faculty and administrators' personal and professional use of social media?
- What is the difference between administrator and faculty views on whether academic freedom applies to social media usage in higher education?
- What do higher education faculty and administrators understand about the legal protections of academic freedom on social media?

A review of the literature was conducted, both to better understand the state of current research and to develop logical arguments supporting the focus of the study. The study's proposed arguments follow:

1. The use of social networking sites in higher education is on the rise.
2. Faculty and administrators are utilizing social networking sites for informal and classroom activities.
3. The potential exists for unprofessional and unethical interaction using social networking sites between students, faculty members, and administrators.
4. Interaction on social networking sites between students, faculty members, and administrators has the potential for unprofessional and unethical behavior.
5. Currently, academic freedom policies at many institutions do not reference social media usage.

6. Without a strong social media policy in place, institutions may be liable for the unethical actions by students, faculty, or administrators.

Finally, an examination and critique of previous literature and methodology revealed two clear challenges to this study. First, there is little research on this topic, which supports the necessity of this study, but it makes providing relevant supporting data difficult. Second, it is evident much of the information currently available on academic freedom comes from groups and institutions with an inherent degree of built-in bias. By acknowledging these challenges and factoring them into the study's design, it is possible they can be mitigated.

## **Chapter 3: Methodology**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to gain a better understanding of the perceptions of higher education faculty and administrators on social media as it pertains to their right to academic freedom. This was done by utilizing a postpositivist approach (Comte, 1848; Phillips & Burbules, 2000). The goal of postpositivism is to engage in a repeatable and scientific investigation of a trend in order to better understand the phenomenon (Phillips & Burbules, 2000). After reviewing the literature and identifying the study's paradigm, the researcher decided to adopt a quantitative approach. A survey was used to supply quantitative data and triangulation of the results was done via interviews with faculty and administrators from a higher education institution. From the survey and interviews, a depiction of the current state of higher educators' perceptions toward social media and academic freedom was created.

A quantitative approach was selected for a number of reasons. While mixed-method studies have numerous benefits, the simplicity of a quantitative study proves valuable in providing an initial round of descriptive data (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007; Phillips & Burbules, 2000). While this study was predominantly quantitative, there were additional qualitative observations in an effort to gain a level of depth that could not be expressed by numbers alone (Merriam, 2009). The study utilized descriptive statistics which were then reinforced by participants' interpretations and descriptions of their experiences and emotions (Creswell, 2009; Merriam, 2009). While this methodology is not without its limitations and challenges (see Creswell, 2011; Bryman, 2007), the descriptive nature of this study called for the richest set of data possible, so that future researchers might build upon the observed phenomena and questions raised.

## **Purpose of the Proposed Study**

The purpose of this study is to gain a better understanding of the perceptions of higher education faculty and administrators on social media as it pertains to their right to academic freedom. As outlined in Chapter Two, a number of potential conflicts (e.g., inflammatory statements, institutional criticism) can arise when faculty members employ social networking sites (SNSs) to express themselves. Institutions and faculty members alike are frequently treading in unknown territory concerning these issues (Pomerantz et al., 2015). The institution and its administrators may be unsure of their legal options to restrict faculty speech on social media in an effort to protect the institution's liability and image. Likewise, faculty members may not be aware of the protections granted to them by academic freedom policies or they may not understand the potential ethical dilemmas that come with the unprecedented interactivity granted by social media sites. As Justice Frankfurter wrote in the decision for *Sweezy v. New Hampshire* (1957), "It is the business of a university to provide that atmosphere which is most conducive to speculation, experiment and creation" (p. 263). Social media is simply the latest venue for this ongoing experimentation.

A secondary hope for this study is to open scholarly conversation surrounding the efficacy, legality, and necessity of social media policies. Prior to the formation of effective policies, an issue must be understood from as many angles as possible (O'Neil, 2015). Therefore, this study attempted to describe the way faculty and administrators view the intersection of social media, policy, and the legal protections provided by academic freedom.

## **Research Questions**

The development of this research question was directed by the convergence of several observations. First, recent trends indicate that social media use in virtually all demographics is on the rise and will likely continue to rise (Pew Research Center, 2015). Second, even to the uncritical



observer, numerous events in popular culture clearly identify the danger of transgressions on social media (Ronson, 2015). Finally, there is a dearth of research on the subject of higher education faculty and administrators and their views on social media use and academic freedom. In light of the many recent issues surrounding higher education and social media, this is an area in need of greater study.

The primary research question driving this study is as follows:

- What impact does the intersectionality of faculty academic freedom and administrators' policies on social media usage have on higher education's function?

The study will expand upon the main research question with the following sub questions:

- What differences exist between higher education faculty and administrators' personal and professional use of social media?
- What is the difference between administrator and faculty views on whether academic freedom applies to social media usage in higher education?
- What do higher education faculty and administrators understand about the legal protections of academic freedom on social media?

## **Research Design**

This study took the form of a descriptive survey. This research methodology facilitated data collection because, as Creswell and Plano Clark (2007) note, there is a need for generalized exploratory findings on the subject. The scarcity of research on the intersection of social media and academic freedom in higher education demonstrated the necessity for a descriptive study. This philosophical approach to descriptive research, as outlined by Creswell and Plano Clark (2007), focuses on an attempt to gain a breadth of knowledge about a subject, rather than depth. Once a broad understanding of the subject exists, in-depth research can be conducted (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

Aggarwal (2016) describes descriptive research as focusing on the prevailing conditions of a given phenomenon in an effort to interpret and describe the situation. The goal of descriptive research is not simply amass data and facts, but to analyze and interpret, compare and identify. Trends should be noted and relationships should be determined. Good descriptive research employs the scientific method in an effort to be critical in analysis and to enhance the researcher's ability to generalize their findings (Salaria, 2012).

The goal of descriptive research, according to Johnson and Christensen (2012), "...is to provide an accurate description or picture of the status or characteristics of a situation or phenomenon" (p. 366). This study was designed to gather an understanding of the perceptions higher education faculty and administrators have on the use of social media and its policies concerning academic freedom. It is currently unclear as to what extent higher education faculty members or administrators understand their academic freedom protections on social media, as well as their perceptions of their institution's social media policy, should they have one (Pomerantz et al., 2015). As a result of these factors, many institutions, administrators, and faculty members are currently unsure of how to use social media (Pomerantz et al., 2015). Descriptive research was able to illuminate many of these unknowns (McMillan & Schumacher, 2014).

The study was also cross-sectional in nature. Cross-sectional analysis is focused on the state of a phenomenon that exists at a single point in time (B. Johnson & Christensen, 2012). The converse to this methodology is the longitudinal study, which observes a trend to understand changes over a period of time (B. Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Cross-sectional methodology was selected due to both resource constraints as well as to capture a picture of the current state of affairs. Future studies, possibly those designed around an intervention procedure, can then use the data collected from this study as a reference point.

Since the present study was undertaken to study the intersectionality of faculty academic freedom and administrator's policies with respect to social media usage, the descriptive survey research method was adopted. This method allowed for the gathering of the present state of the phenomenon along with scientific analysis of the data and the ability to identify trends and relationships (Salaria, 2012).

### **Target Population, Sampling Method, and Related Procedures**

The primary target population for this study was higher education faculty and administrators. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the number of higher education faculty members is approximately 1.5 million individuals (Ginder, Kelly-Reid, & Mann, 2014). The same study, conducted by Ginder et al. (2014), found that there were nearly 620,000 people employed in higher education administrative positions. While the collection of data for Ginder et al.'s (2014) study was tightly controlled, it still relied primarily on self-reporting and is based on provisional data. Therefore, it is possible that these numbers are conservative estimates. Faculty members may be excluding some adjunct positions that primarily perform other duties for an institution (e.g., librarian, computer technician) but teach courses in addition to their traditional roles. Likewise, the administrative count may be excluding staff members who choose not to identify as administration even though their positions may primarily be administrative.

This study employed simple random sampling from a pool of participants (Fowler, 2014). Simple random sampling was selected for this study, due to its convenience and providing all members of the selected population an equal chance at selection (B. Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Qualtrics, a third-party research organization, maintains the pool of participants (2016a). As such, two requirements existed for selection as a participant in this study: (a) current employment (or retired) as either a faculty member or administrator in a higher education institution, and (b) a member of Qualtrics paneling service. Qualtrics utilizes outside companies to gather participants

for panels, therefore, it is unknown how many participants met the necessary qualifications to be included in the sample pool for this specific study.

The survey was executed by Qualtrics via an Internet-based web survey system (2016b). Participants logged on to a secure website and were given the opportunity to complete the survey if they met the parameters of qualification. Data were collected anonymously, with each respondent identified only by a randomly generated respondent identification number (Qualtrics, 2016a).

The total population for this study was 855 candidates from Qualtrics (2016a) panel system. Utilizing Fowler (2014) and Creswell's (2009) recommendations for accuracy, based on this population, a sample size of 128 is recommended. However, since the researcher is using a third party to conduct the survey, a sample of this size was not feasible due to costs. However, the researcher's budget permitted a sample size of 100.

Purposive sampling was utilized for the interview portion of the study (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Participants were drawn from volunteers at an available higher education institution in the Pacific Northwest. Due to the anonymous nature of the PSMHES it is impossible to know if interview subjects participated in the survey, but it is unlikely. The sample size, due to time constraints of participants, was small. A mixed sample of nine total participants was achieved, with four faculty members and five administrators.

## **Instrumentation**

The instrument for this study was the Perceptions of Social Media in Higher Education Survey (PSMHES). A copy of the survey is found in Appendix B. This survey was designed according to principles espoused by Dillman, Smyth, and Christian (2014) and Fowler (2014).

Questions for the PSMHES were designed with two goals in mind. First, Dillman et al. (2014) have argued that the key to successful survey research is through reducing error. The four types of error that must be reduced for a successful survey are coverage, sampling, nonresponse,

and measurement (Dillman et al., 2014). For this survey, three of these errors (coverage, sampling, and nonresponse) were minimized by employing Qualtrics panel technology (2016a). The fourth type of error, measurement, was controlled by employing Fowler's (2014) design principles.

Fowler (2014) posits that designing quality survey questions involves maximizing the reliability and validity of the answers. Increasing reliability, according to Fowler (2014), involves elements of properly wording questions, providing adequate response options, defining necessary terms, and utilizing proper question types. Validity is maximized by making questions clear, ensuring respondents are capable of providing proper answers, and minimizing the introduction of bias into question design (Fowler, 2014).

The instrument for this study contained six primary sections:

Section One: Demographic Information. This section of the survey instrument contained standard demographic questions (e.g., age, education) as well as gathering information on the respondent's institution and job title.

Section Two: Social Media Usage. This section of the survey instrument asked respondents to provide basic data on their social media habits and their knowledge of their institution's social media policies (if the institution has a policy).

Section Three: Attitudes Toward Social Media. In this section, participants were asked about their perceptions of social media, their views on its usage, and how social media usage may reflect upon the user.

Section Four: Attitudes Toward Social Media Policies. This section of the survey specifically addressed participants' views about social media policies, who these policies are designed to protect, and whether these policies have the ability to limit speech.

Section Five: Academic Freedom and Social Media. This section of the survey ascertained respondent's understanding of academic freedom, its interaction with social media, and how academic freedom may be affected by social media policies.

Sections Three, Four, and Five utilized a five-point Likert-style scale. The five options given to respondents were "strongly disagree," "disagree," "neutral," "agree," and "strongly agree."

The sixth section of the PSMHES provided respondents with open-ended questions designed to elicit their opinions surrounding the issues of social media, policy, and academic freedom. This section formed the foundation for the qualitative aspect of the survey. Respondents were given the opportunity to provide their thoughts, feelings, or general perceptions about their use of social media in higher education, institutional social media policies, and academic freedom.

Respondents were given four text boxes with statements designed to prompt the elicitation of their feelings, attitudes, and judgments toward social media use, social media policies, and academic freedom. Three of the prompts (found in Appendix B) were designed to retrieve information about specific elements of this study (Merriam, 2009). The fourth prompt was completely open-ended, giving the respondent the chance to provide any additional thoughts they may have had about the survey, topics raised in the survey, or additional questions.

Following the completion and analysis of the PSMHES, separate qualitative interviews were conducted. Each subject was presented with an introductory letter (Appendix C) explaining the purpose of the study, presenting them with the initial interview questions, and asking them to read the consent letter. Subjects who chose to participate responded to the prompts in writing and the interviews were conducted via email or Google shared document. Participants were given the alternative of a phone interview should they not wish to participate in a written interview.

## **Data Collection**

This study employed two phases of data collection. In the first phase Qualtrics (2016a) contacted potential participants via email and provided them the option to complete the survey in exchange for donations to charity and the chance to win a sweepstakes prize. Potential participants were identified through information provided in their Qualtrics profile (2016a). Each Qualtrics (2016a) panel participant is required to indicate certain criteria when registering for the service, such as education, industry, and employment status. The PSMHES was only sent to those who indicated that their industry is “education” and their job function is either “administrator” or “educator.” Following this identification, each participant was required to answer a screening question as to whether or not they were employed in higher education. Those who indicated they were employed in higher education were then allowed to participate in the survey.

An introduction was presented to each participant in the form of a letter. A copy of the letter is found in Appendix A. This letter informed participants about the goal of the survey, the purpose of the research study, and it assured the participants their responses would remain anonymous. It also explained how to contact the researcher and Concordia University’s Institutional Review Board should they have concerns over the ethical use of their data.

Data collection occurred over a short period of time. Qualtrics (2016a) maintains a large pool of potential participants in order to ensure expedient data collection. Because Qualtrics was employed, data collection took place over a short time frame (7/28/2016 – 8/1/2016). At the end of this period, the survey was closed and potential participants were no longer allowed access (Qualtrics, 2016a).

The second phase consisted of interviews with faculty and administrators. Subjects were presented with an introductory letter asking for their participation. If the subject was willing to participate they answered a series of questions informed by the responses gathered from phase one

of the study. The goal of this phase was to both triangulate the data gathered from the PSMHES while also going into greater depth on certain issues.

### **Operationalization and Identification of Variables**

At the core of this study's research is to analyze how higher education faculty and administrators perceive social media policies. The goal of operationalizing is to make the abstract concept at the center of a study measurable and observable (B. Johnson & Christensen, 2012; Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994). For purposes of this study, this was done by identifying core constructs that, when taken together, represent a holistic view of how higher education faculty and administrators perceive social media and social media policies.

The three constructs that formed the foundation of this study are the differences that exist between faculty and administrator views, how faculty and administrators view the application of academic freedom to social media, and the legal challenges presented by applying academic freedom to social media. The operationalization of these concepts was provided by the participants' data from the PSMHES survey instrument. Sections Three, Four, and Five of the PSMHES provided empirical data through Likert-style test items to operationalize the foundational concept of this study. One example from the survey instrument's Likert-scaled statements is shown here.

"Social media policies should prevent faculty members or administrators from criticizing their institution." A respondent checked a box to show whether he or she "Strongly Agrees," with the statement. While this choice does not definitively demonstrate the respondent's preference, it indicates a predilection about the use of social media policies. Answering this question alone did not provide a direct answer to the core concept of this study, but combined with the other questions and statements in the survey instrument it was used to indicate how a higher education faculty member or administrator may perceive social media usage.



## **Data Analysis Procedures**

The major goal of descriptive research is to draw from the data the fundamental traits, qualities, and trends, which are then presented in a summarized format (B. Johnson & Christensen, 2012, p. 452). Therefore, the analysis of this survey's data included exclusively descriptive statistics.

For the Likert-scale statements and options, the mean, standard deviation, and frequency distributions were reported for each of the two groups (administrators and faculty). These means were compared to determine whether there are statistically significant differences in the perceptions between the two groups. Secondly, comparisons based on particular respondent characteristics (e.g., type of institution, age) were conducted to determine if there are statistically significant differences between the characteristic and response.

The main tool for analysis in this study is the chi-squared test (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). The purpose of the chi-squared test is to determine if two variables are associated, which also provides its other moniker, chi-square test of independence (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). The chi-squared test was selected for a number of reasons. First, the variables utilized are categorical, primarily Likert-style responses (Agresti, 2012). Second, there is independence of observations, primarily in the sense that a participant cannot be both a member of the faculty and administrator groups (Agresti, 2012). Finally, all data gathered must have a minimum cell count (in SPSS) greater than five (Agresti, 2012). Given that the data from the survey meets these qualifications, the chi-squared test was utilized.

The data provided by this study was analyzed with 95% confidence intervals, as is traditional for social science research (Fowler, 2014; B. Johnson & Christensen, 2012). By establishing an alpha level of .05, the risk of committing a Type I error is projected to be 5 out of 100 (B. Johnson & Christensen, 2012). According to Fowler (2014), with this confidence interval

based on the sample size of 100, there is a 4% range on the confidence limits. This indicates that for a given answer the probability of error is  $\pm 4\%$  (Fowler, 2014). For example, the survey produced a sample showing that 30% of respondents were administrators. With the confidence interval it can be estimated the true percentage is between 26% and 34% of the given population works as administrators.

Quantitative data was analyzed using the computer program SPSS. Qualtrics (2016b) automatically exported the data gathered into a .sav file, readable by the SPSS software package. In addition, Qualtrics (2016b) is capable of preparing graphical representations of data gathered through the survey item.

The final section of the PSMHES was dedicated to open-ended qualitative responses from participants. These answers were coded according to the process laid out by Merriam (2009). Coding involves analyzing the responses and identifying themes or general categories in the data (Merriam, 2009). The final step in the analysis was comparing the coded themes to those that have emerged from the quantitative data and noting similarities and discrepancies. Data gathered from the interview phase of the study was coded using the same methodology.

It is important to note the emergence of patterns in data when coding qualitative responses. Merriam (2009) recommends initially developing broad categories which cover the greater theme of the study. In the case of this study, categories may be as broad as “uses social media,” “dislikes additional policy,” or “distrusts social media.” Having constructed these broader categories, specific statements made by participants can be organized and compared (Merriam, 2009). It is at this point, Merriam (2009) notes, researcher intuition will guide the development and notation of patterns.

## **Limitations on the Research Design**

Any research project suffers from inherent flaws, and this project was no different. One of the most notable was the lack of quality data on the Qualtrics' pool of participants (2016a). Because Qualtrics utilizes a panel system to recruit respondents, data was not available to the researcher prior to running the survey instrument about the demographic makeup of the sample. While Qualtrics engages in benchmarking research to ensure their population is representative of the U.S. population, this data was not available for analysis (2016a).

A few specific limitations were encountered because of this study's use of an online survey methodology. Wright (2006) identifies coverage, sampling, and nonresponse error as the three main challenges faced by online surveys. The use of Qualtrics (2016b) as a research tool helped to minimize these common problems. The size of Qualtrics' (2016a) pool of participants helped to ensure a broad enough cross section of higher education faculty and administrators to provide adequate coverage. Similarly, Qualtrics (2016b) allowed for tools to be used (e.g., qualifying questions, demographic screens) to help ensure a sample representative of the population the researcher wished to sample. Nonresponse was avoided by Qualtrics' (2016b) guarantee of providing the sample size requested.

Limitations presented by the descriptive nature of this study were also present. Grimes and Schulz (2002) make note of several challenges specific to the descriptive methodology. While bias is a challenge in all forms of research, the nature of descriptive research (e.g. predesigned questionnaires, interviews) proves more susceptible than many other forms. The subjective nature of gathering the present state of a phenomenon can easily lead to the researcher inserting their own subjective opinion into their findings. Another frequent challenge is the presence – and inability to control for – confounding variables. Trying to draw out independent and dependent variables in a

descriptive study can be dangerous, particularly when the study is being conducted as the first foray into an unknown or unstudied subject.

Johnson (1953) notes another limitation unique to descriptive research is the static nature of study. Descriptive research, and in particular cross-sectional descriptive research, is generally used to take a “snapshot” of a given phenomenon. While this is undoubtedly useful, taking a static look at a dynamic situation is inherently limited. To quote Johnson (1953), “The investigator learns what is being done, not what could be done or should be done. He determines usual practices, rather than causes, reasons, meanings, or possibilities.” (p. 241). This study, due to its technology-centric subject matter, is particularly limited by the challenge of taking a static view at such a dynamic challenge.

Because of the qualitative elements of this study, transferability is also a limitation. Transferability, or the ability for the consumer of research to apply the findings to other elements of research or their study, is a potential limitation of this study (Given, 2008). A goal of any research study, and particularly a descriptive and cross-sectional study, should be for the results to be relevant to other researchers and influence their work (Given, 2008). This can be accomplished by producing valuable data that is relevant, transparent, valid, and credible, all qualities of highly transferable research (Given, 2008).

A final noted limitation is that of sample size. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) contend that for a population greater than one million, the largest sample size available is ideal, with a minimum of 384 participants and assumption of standard error at .05 percent. Creswell (2009) and Fowler (2014) support this concept, arguing for a sample size as close to 400 participants as possible. However, due to the costs associated with employing a third-party research firm it was not possible to secure an adequate sample size.

## **Expected Findings**

The findings from the survey were expected to show how higher education faculty and administrators view social media use and social media policies. It was predicted that as a general trend both groups would skew toward less restriction on social media use by higher education staff. Both groups would likely also view academic freedom as a right that cannot be infringed upon by university administrations.

It was theorized that there would be some degree of difference between administrators and faculty in their views on social media and institutional policies. For example, PSMHE questions 16e-h could see a strong variation between administrators' responses and faculty's responses. This can be explained by the different viewpoints of administrators, since their positions are geared toward the preservation and continued operation of the institution, whereas faculty members are more concerned with protecting their own rights.

It was expected that the open-ended response section of the PSMHE would mimic the trends of the quantitative sections. It was predicted there could be an overarching theme of academic freedom protecting the use of social media for both personal and professional purposes. Again, the tendency could be that administrators were more willing to attempt to restrict faculty use of social media in an effort to protect the reputation of their institutions.

## **Ethical Issues**

**Conflict of interest.** There is no conflict of interest. Beyond this paper as a component of completing the requirements for an earned doctorate, the author did not stand to benefit in any way from this report.

**Researcher's position.** The researcher's position is one of an outsider. Due to this outsider status, the researcher possesses a minimal amount of preconceived notions surrounding the key facets of this study. This position potentially allows for a more objective view when engaging in

the research process and data analysis. The researcher does not participate in social networking and is not currently employed by any higher education institution.

**Ethical issues in proposed study.** There were no ethical issues in the proposed study.

### **Chapter 3 Summary**

The methodology for this study was designed to approach the problem utilizing a number of different strategies in order to capture the current state of the phenomenon (Creswell, 2009; Fowler, 2014; Merriam, 2009). Most prominently, this study employed a quantitative survey supplemented by semi-structured interviews in an effort to gather multiple facets of higher educators' perspectives toward social media (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007). This study was also cross-sectional in nature, meaning that it focused on a single point in time, rather than taking a historical or trend-based viewpoint (B. Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Given the breadth of gathered data, multiple methods were employed for analysis, including descriptive statistics and coding of the participants' responses.

A survey instrument was delivered to participants utilizing Qualtrics' panel system (2016a). The survey instrument consisted of a combination of multiple choice, Likert-style, and open-ended text boxes. Qualtrics (2016a) contacted potential respondents based on the information they provided when they signed up to be a panel participant. Participants were compensated by Qualtrics with donations to charities of their choosing as well as allowing each participant an entry into a sweepstakes drawing. The information gathered from the survey was entirely anonymous and the participants were only identified by voluntary demographic information.

Following the administration of the survey instrument, interviews were conducted with a small group of higher education administrators and faculty members in an effort to triangulate the results of the study. While these interviews were brief and informal, the goal was to make sure the results of the PSMHES aligned with the day-to-day realities faced by higher education employees.

This study has its limitations. The challenge of attempting to provide a descriptive view of a new phenomenon is inherently difficult, thereby providing a multitude of caveats the researcher and reader need keep in mind. A main challenge, pointed out long ago by Johnson (1953), is the static nature of a descriptive study. Given the dynamic nature of the technology at the core of this study, a static picture is of limited use. Likewise, historical trends, while easy to decipher and note, are only so good in that they may be used to forecast a potential immediate future. Descriptive research can be viewed rather like providing a weather report – the further from the point of data gathering the less accurate the prediction. Transferability of this study's findings also proved to be a limitation due to the cross-sectional nature and potentially limited sample size (Creswell, 2009; Fowler, 2014; Given, 2008).

## **Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results**

### **Introduction**

The goal of this study was to gain an understanding of how higher education administrators and faculty view the intersection of academic freedom and social media. Though this study was primarily aimed at being descriptive, a secondary goal was to determine if there were any statistically significant discrepancies between the two roles (administrator and faculty). In an effort to gather this knowledge a research question was developed:

- What impact does the intersectionality of faculty academic freedom and administrators' policies on social media usage have on higher education's function?

The study will expand upon the main research question with the following sub questions:

- What differences exist between higher education faculty and administrators' personal and professional use of social media?
- What is the difference between administrator and faculty views on whether academic freedom applies to social media usage in higher education?
- What do higher education faculty and administrators understand about the legal protections of academic freedom on social media?

In order to ascertain answers to these questions a survey was developed. The "Perceptions of Social Media in Higher Education" (see Appendix B) survey consisted of 30 total questions, including 8 demographic questions, 7 questions about social media usage, and 16 Likert-style questions about social media and academic freedom. The researcher employed Qualtrics, a third-party research firm, to gather potential respondents and distribute the survey (2016b). The survey was run for a total of five days, from July 28, 2016 to August 1, 2016. Due to the use of Qualtrics, 100 responses were gathered in this short time period. Qualtrics program managers and data analysts were able to employ quality checks such as timers and attention filters in order to



maximize the validity of the data. The following statistics presented in this chapter represent a summary of responses collected from the survey instrument.

In an effort to triangulate the results of the survey, interviews were conducted with faculty and administrators at a small liberal arts university in the Pacific Northwest. The interview questions (Appendix C) were designed as a starting point for a conversation that would allow the researcher to gain a greater depth of understanding for how administrators and faculty members view social media's role in higher education, social media policies, and how social media relates to academic freedom. Data gathered from these interviews were coded according to the process outlined by Merriam (2009).

Demographic data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and compared to data from national surveys of higher education faculty and administrators, allowing the sample results to be contrasted to the greater population of higher education (Ginder et al., 2014; B. Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Likert-style questions were analyzed and are presented using descriptive statistics. The primary tool for statistical analysis in this study is the chi-square test for association (Agresti, 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2012).

### **Description of the Sample**

The sample consisted of 100 participants gathered through Qualtrics panel services (Qualtrics, 2016a). As mentioned in Chapter 3, a sample of 200 or more would have been superior, but cost was a limiting factor. Several procedures were employed in an effort to increase validity and reliability of the sample. First, the survey was “soft launched” to a limited number of respondents and data were thoroughly examined by both the researcher and survey experts from Qualtrics. This led to two changes. Participants who filled out only part of the survey were excluded due to both the cluttering effect this had on the data as well as reducing the data being front-loaded on the introductory questions, with very few completing the whole survey. Second,

question eight (“Which of the following best fits your job title?”) was made a screening question, with a wrong answer (i.e., an answer other than faculty or administrator) removing the participant from the survey. Following the soft launch, Qualtrics utilized gathered metrics (e.g., average time-to-completion, participation in other surveys) to add quality checks, such as speed timers and attention filters, in an effort to increase validity of the data.

The sample of interview subjects was obtained through purposive sampling. Interview subjects were contacted via email with the Introductory Letter found in Appendix C. Of the fourteen subjects contacted, nine responded they would be willing to participate. The sample consisted of four faculty members and five administrators.

**Characteristics of survey participants.** The first section of the Perceptions of Social Media in Higher Education survey was dedicated to gathering demographic data on the participants. Data collected about each respondent included: (1) gender, (2) age, (3) ethnicity, (4) education, (5) employment status, (6) institution of employment, and (7) job title. Descriptive statistics will be detailed for each of these data sets in the following sections.

**Gender.** The gender distribution of the respondents ( $n = 100$ ) consisted of 60% female and 40% male. This shows the data represents a slightly more female-centric sample than national figures would indicate (Snyder, Brey, & Dillow, 2016). The most recent numbers from the National Center for Education Statistics suggest that women make up 54% of the higher education workforce with men composing the remaining 46% (Snyder et al., 2016).

**Age.** Participants were presented with four age ranges. The majority of participants ( $n = 52$ ) were between the ages of 30-49 years old. A small percentage of the participants ( $n = 17$ ) were over the age of 50. Given that research indicates the average age of higher education

faculty is trending upwards (Ma, 2004) and was 49.8 as of 1998, this argues for the data from this survey being skewed towards younger higher education faculty and administrators. This is likely an artifact of the online method of delivery. Table 3 summarizes the age distribution of participants.

Table 3.

*Age Distribution of Survey Participants*

Age	Frequency
18-29	31
30-49	52
50+	17

**Ethnicity.** Table 4 summarizes the ethnicity distribution of survey participants. The single largest group was White participants ( $n = 79$ ) and the smallest was American Indian or Alaska Native ( $n = 1$ ). According to data from the National Center for Education Statistics (Snyder et al., 2016), the ethnicity distribution is close to the greater population. While White respondents made up the majority, they were only represented 14% higher than national data, however Black or African American respondents ( $n = 13$ ) were noticeably higher than their 9% national representation (Snyder et al., 2016). Conversely, Asian respondents ( $n = 2$ ) were underrepresented, with 6% of higher education personnel nationally of Asian heritage (Snyder et al., 2016). For demographic purposes, ethnicity was divided into two categories: White and Non-White.

Table 4.

*Ethnicity Distribution of Survey Participants*

Ethnicity	Frequency
White	79
Non-White	21

**Education.** As expected, participants in the study were, on average, highly educated. Only 12% of the sample did not possess a college degree, and more than half (n = 56) had achieved a graduate degree. According to the most recent data from the National Center for Education Statistics (1999) approximately 80% of higher education faculty have a master's degree or higher. The educational attainment of this study's sample is lower than what may be expected, however the inclusion of administrators may have lowered this ratio, as table 6 indicates.

Table 5.

*Education Distribution of Survey Participants*

Education Level	Frequency
Graduate Degree	56
Non-Graduate Level	44

Table 6.

*Education Distribution by Job Title of Survey Participants*

Education Level	Job Title			
	Administrator		Faculty Member	
	Frequency	Percent	Frequency	Percent
High school diploma/GED	1	3.3%	2	2.9%
Some college	5	16.7%	4	5.7%
Bachelor's degree	13	43.3%	19	27.1%
Master's degree	7	23.3%	32	45.7%
Doctoral degree	4	13.3%	13	18.6%
Total	30	100%	70	100%

**Employment.** The vast majority of respondents (n = 78) were employed either full-time in higher education. Of the participants who were not employed full-time (n = 22), the majority were employed part-time in higher education.

Table 7.

*Employment Distribution of Survey Participants*

Employment	Frequency
Full-time	78
Not Full-time	22

***Institution.*** The breakdown of institutional employment can be found in table 8. The majority of respondents (n = 73) work for public institutions, comparable to the 62% reported by the NCES figures (2014). Of those employed by private institutions (n = 27) most worked for private, non-profit institutions (n = 21) with the remainder (n = 6) employed by private, for-profit institutions. Again, this data is comparable to that found by the NCES (2014), with small variations accounted for by the size of the sample.

Table 8.

*Institution Distribution of Survey Participants*

Institution Type	Frequency
Public	73
Private, non-profit	21
Private, for-profit	6

***Job title.*** Of the 100 respondents, 30 reported working as administrators and 70 work as faculty. According to Snyder, de Brea, and Dillow (2016) the distribution should be closer to 14% administrative and 86% faculty members. Administrators, however, are intentionally over-represented in an effort to achieve a large enough sample to be comparable to the faculty members.

Table 9.

*Job Title of Survey Participants*

Job Title	Frequency
Administrator	30
Faculty	70

***Open-ended questions.*** Of the 100 total respondents only 3 were found to have provided inadequate information in the quantitative section of the survey. These three were excluded due to providing answers that were unreadable (i.e., nonsense words). While many respondents provided one or two word answers, these responses were still coded along with those providing information that was more detailed.

## **Summary of the Results**

The researcher attempted to maximize the statistical validity and reliability by utilizing multiple approaches. The following section details what specific steps were taken to maximize content validity, as well as those steps taken to measure and enhance reliability (B. Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Additionally, threats to internal validity are examined and addressed.

Content validity was improved through several steps taken by the researcher. The primary method of enhancing this validity was through the use of subject matter experts (SMEs) as recommended by Haynes, Richard, and Kubany (1995). Numerous SMEs were employed during the design and revision of the testing instrument, each of which offered some degree of feedback regarding design, orientation, and inclusion of certain test questions. A secondary method was through the analysis of data provided by existing measures of elements found within the testing instrument. For example, the “Survey of Higher Education Administrator Perceptions and Attitudes Towards State Authorization of Online Learning” (Vassar, 2014) was used as a comparison tool to contrast test questions that had been successful in gathering valuable data with those found in the PSMHES.

**Statistical tools.** While much of the descriptive statistics (e.g., frequency, mean) were computed and provided for variables, a more advanced statistical tool is the focus of this section. The main statistical tool utilized was the chi-square test for association (Agresti, 2012).

The chi-square test for association, sometimes referred to as the chi-square test for independence, is a tool used to determine whether two nominal variables have an association (Agresti, 2012; Johnson & Christensen, 2012). Observed frequencies – that is, the data gathered – are compared to the expected frequencies were there no associations between the variables. The expected frequencies are calculated based on there being no association between the two variables. By comparing the expected frequencies with the observed frequencies, a test statistic is produced. The closer the observed data is to the expected data, the smaller the statistic, and the further apart the observed data is to the expected data, the greater the statistic. Given that the test statistic represents association, the larger the statistic is, the more likely a statistically significant results has been found (Laerd Statistics, 2017).

### **Detailed Analysis**

Data analysis was conducted to determine whether the data provides statistically significant results. In order to do this, each research question must be analyzed from two perspectives – the quantitative, data-driven analysis of the PSMHES as well as the qualitative feedback garnered from participants. This section will be broken down based on the individual research questions.

The primary research question driving this study is as follows:

- What impact does the intersectionality of faculty academic freedom and administrators' policies on social media usage have on higher education's function?

The study expands upon the main research question with the following sub questions:

- What differences exist between higher education faculty and administrators' personal and professional use of social media?
- What is the difference between administrator and faculty views on whether academic freedom applies to social media usage in higher education?

- What do higher education faculty and administrators understand about the legal protections of academic freedom on social media?

Descriptive statistics are available for the survey items in Appendix D. The following statistical analyses are primarily focused on chi-square tests. Supporting this statistical analysis is qualitative data from the open-ended survey questions as well as interviews.

**Research sub-question 1.** The first research sub-question is as follows: What differences exist between higher education faculty and administrators' personal and professional use of social media? Two questions from the PSMHES were utilized to answer this question. Both questions used Likert-style responses and sought to measure the extent of social media use. One question (Question 9) measured personal use and the second (Question 10) measured professional use. The same six social media platforms were analyzed for both questions (Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, Instagram, and Snapchat). Analyzing these two questions and comparing the results can allow for a conclusion to be drawn about what differences may exist between faculty and administrators regarding their use of social media personally and professionally.

**Professional usage.** A chi-square analysis was conducted to evaluate whether higher education job title was associated with the use of social media professionally. The two variables were use of social media with two levels (yes and no) and job title of higher education academic employee with two levels (administrator and faculty). Job title and use of social media were found to be significantly different,  $\text{Pearson } X^2(1, N=600) = 10.19, p = .001$ , Cramer's  $V = .130$ . Cramer's  $V$  revealed a small effect size, with 13% of the variance in the use of social media professionally accounted for by job title. The proportions of administrators and faculty who use social media were .66 and .51 respectively. Based on the odds ratio, the odds of using social media professionally were 1.80 times higher for administrators than for faculty.



Table 10.

*Cross Tabulation of Job Title and Professional Use of Social Media*

Professional Use of Social Media	Job Title		X <sup>2</sup>	Cramer's V
	Administrator	Faculty		
Yes	118 (1.8)	216 (-1.2)	10.19**	.130
No	62 (-2.0)	204 (1.3)		

*Note.* \*\* =  $p < .01$ . Standardized residuals appear in parentheses below group frequencies

**Personal usage.** A Chi-square analysis was conducted to evaluate whether higher education job title was associated with the use of social media personally. The two variables were use of social media with two levels (yes and no) and job title of higher education academic employee with two levels (administrator and faculty). Job title and use of social media were found to be significantly different, Pearson  $X^2 (1, N=600) = 8.19, p = .004$ , Cramer's  $V = .117$ . Cramer's  $V$  revealed a small effect size, with 11% of the variance in the use of social media personally accounted for by job title. The proportions of administrators and faculty who use social media were .78 and .61 respectively. Based on the odds ratio, the odds of using social media personally were 1.30 times higher for administrators than for faculty.

Table 11.

*Cross Tabulation of Job Title and Personal Use of Social Media*

Personal Use of Social Media	Job Title		X <sup>2</sup>	Cramer's V
	Administrator	Faculty		
Yes	141 (1.3)	280 (-0.9)	8.19**	.117
No	39 (-2.0)	140 (1.3)		

*Note.* \*\* =  $p < .01$ . Standardized residuals appear in parentheses below group frequencies

**Research sub-question 2.** The second research sub-question is as follows: What is the difference between administrator and faculty views on whether academic freedom applies to social media usage in higher education? Question 18 collected Likert-style data on three questions (18b-18d) pertaining to the application of academic freedom concepts in higher education. Analyzing these elements will allow the research sub-question to be answered.

**Academic freedom.** A chi-square analysis was conducted to evaluate whether higher education job title was associated with the belief that academic freedom applies to social media in higher education. The two variables were belief academic freedom applies to social media with three levels (yes, no, and no opinion) and job title of higher education academic employee with two levels (administrator and faculty). Job title and belief that academic freedom applies were found to be significantly different, Pearson  $X^2 (1, N=300) = 12.4, p = .002$ , Cramer's  $V = .203$ . Cramer's  $V$  revealed a small effect size, with 20% of the variance in the belief academic freedom applies to social media accounted for by job title. The proportions of administrators and faculty who believe academic freedom applies to social media were .52 and .69 respectively. Based on the odds ratio, the odds of believing academic freedom applies to social media were .90 times higher for faculty than for administrators.

Table 12.

*Cross Tabulation of Job Title and Belief Academic Freedom Applies to Social Media*

Academic Freedom Applies to Social Media	Job Title		$X^2$	Cramer's $V$
	Administrator	Faculty		
Yes	47 (-1.4)	144 (0.9)	12.4**	.203
No	6 (-0.7)	21 (0.5)		
No opinion	37 (2.5)	45 (-1.6)		

*Note.* \*\* =  $p < .01$ . Standardized residuals appear in parentheses below group frequencies

**Research sub-question 3.** The third research sub-question is as follows: What is the difference between administrator and faculty views regarding the application of academic freedom legal protections to social media? Elements of questions 16 (Q16c, d, e, and h) and 17 (Q17c and d) collected data relevant to administrator and faculty views regarding the application of academic freedom legal protections to social media. Analysis of these elements will allow this sub-question to be answered.

***Application of legal protections.*** A chi-square analysis was conducted to evaluate whether higher education job title was associated with views regarding the application of academic legal protections to social media. The two variables were views regarding the legal application of academic freedom to social media with three levels (yes, no, and no opinion) and job title of higher education academic employee with two levels (administrator and faculty). Job title and views regarding the legal application of academic freedom to social media were not found to be significantly different, Pearson  $X^2 (1, N=600) = 0.98, p = .612$ , Cramer's  $V = .040$ . Cramer's  $V$  revealed a minimal effect size, with 4% of the variance of views regarding the legal application of Table 13.

*Cross Tabulation of Job Title and Views Regarding the Legal Applications of Academic Freedom*

Legal Protections of Academic Freedom Apply to Social Media	Job Title		$X^2$	Cramer's $V$
	Administrator	Faculty		
Yes	83 (.0)	195 (.0)	.981**	.040
No	56 (-0.5)	143 (0.3)		
No opinion	41 (0.7)	82 (-0.4)		

*Note.* \*\* =  $p < .01$ . Standardized residuals appear in parentheses below group frequencies

academic freedom to social media accounted for by job title. The proportions of administrators and faculty who view the legal protections of academic freedom applying to social media were .461 and .464 respectively. Based on the odds ratio, the odds of differing views regarding the legal applications of academic freedom to social media were identical.

### **Open-ended questions and interview responses.**

*Personal and professional use of social media.* The data gathered from the PSMHES open-ended questions and interviews aligns with the quantitative data. A general theme was found through coding of administrators being less concerned about the usage of social media, both personally and professionally. Administrators were more likely to mention the value of social media in elements of their professional life (e.g., marketing, student communication) and demonstrated less concern about the use of social media in higher education in general. By contrast, faculty members described their usage of social media as more protected. Faculty specifically mentioned the danger of students viewing their social media accounts as well as personal postings being used against them in a professional setting. While both administrators and faculty saw value in social media as a learning tool, faculty displayed a more acute awareness of potential dangers.

*Academic freedom and social media.* The interview and open-ended survey responses were mixed regarding the belief academic freedom should apply to social media. While both administrators and faculty generally agreed that academic freedom should apply to social media, a number of both groups seemed to think that social media should not fall under academic freedom's protections. Many administrators pointed out that they were undecided, and at this time it is unknown if this is from ignorance of academic freedom protections or a lack of concern. The most frequent negative response coded involved the belief that social media was used primarily for non-professional purposes and, therefore, could not be considered academic communication.

***Legal protections of academic freedom.*** Much like the quantitative data, the open-ended survey questions and interview responses proved very mixed. As sub-question two demonstrates, both faculty and administrators generally agree that social media should fall under the purview of academic freedom. However, when it comes to specific legal protections (e.g., criticizing institution, monitoring social media accounts) the responses proved to be confusing. Many faculty and administrators showed clear evidence of not understanding their rights under academic freedom. While only 10% of the survey respondents admitted to not understanding academic freedom (PSMHES Question 18a), many qualitative responses indicate otherwise. One example of this comes from PSMHES Question 22, “Academic freedom relates to course objectives as they relate to outcomes. It does not guarantee me the right to say or teach whatever I want. It is not the same as freedom of speech”. This type of response is demonstrative of several others, proving a fundamentally unsound understanding of academic freedom and its protections.

***Ancillary findings.*** While not directly related to answering the research question, additional data was collected on how administrators and faculty value social media. Two questions (Q16a-b) asked respondents to rate the value of social media as a tool for communication as well as a means of disseminating scholarly information.

***Value of social media as a tool for communication.*** A chi-square analysis was conducted to evaluate whether higher education job title was associated with views regarding the value of social media as a tool for communication. The two variables were views regarding the value of social media as a tool for communication (yes, no, and no opinion) and job title of higher education academic employee with two levels (administrator and faculty). Job title and views regarding the value of social media as a tool for communication were found to be statistically significant, Pearson  $X^2(1, N=200) = 7.68, p = .022$ , Cramer’s  $V = .196$ . Cramer’s  $V$  revealed a

small effect size, with 19% of the variance of views regarding the value of social media as a tool for communication accounted for by job title. The proportions of administrators and faculty who view social media as a valuable tool for communication were .917 and .793 respectively. Based on the odds ratio, the odds of differing views regarding the value of social media as a tool for communication were .7 higher for administrators than for faculty.

Table 14.

*Cross Tabulation of Job Title and Views Regarding the Value of Social Media as a Tool for Communication*

Social Media is a Useful Tool For Communication	Job Title		X <sup>2</sup>	Cramer's V
	Administrator	Faculty		
Yes	55 (.7)	111 (-0.5)	7.68**	.196
No	0 (-2.2)	16 (1.4)		
No opinion	5 (-0.2)	13 (0.1)		

*Note.* \*\* =  $p < .01$ . Standardized residuals appear in parentheses below group frequencies

The data from the interview and open-ended survey questions from the PSMHES overwhelmingly supports the concept of social media as a valuable tool for communication. Nearly every respondent was able to find something positive to say about social media's communicative impact on higher education, whether they participated or not. However, administrators were more effusive in their praise, with many faculty members mentioning that, though social media is useful, it is a "double-edged sword" in their views. Despite these concerns, the majority of faculty still seemed to indicate that the good outweighed the bad.

## Chapter 4 Summary

This chapter presented the results from the Perceptions of Social Media in Higher Education Survey (PSMHES) and qualitative interviews in an effort to answer the research

questions and test the hypothesis. Given the scope of this study, and its descriptive nature, it should not be surprising the results were mixed.

Two of the sub-questions revealed interesting and significant findings. It was found that administrators are far more likely to utilize social media in both their personal and professional lives as compared to faculty members. While faculty members do frequently use social media, they mentioned a reticence to engage in such a public activity for fear of students contacting them inappropriately or their professional and private lives comingling. Fewer administrators mentioned such hesitance, instead frequently pointing out the benefits that social media can have in networking and marketing.

Also of note, faculty members were more likely to believe that the protections of academic freedom applied to social media. While administrators also generally shared this view, a sizable segment of the administrators surveyed had no opinion as to whether academic freedom applied to social media. Though many in both job groups support this protection, the most frequently coded negative responses indicated a belief that social media was primarily used for non-professional activities and did not fall under academic freedom's protections.

The third research question was found to have no significant difference between faculty and administrators. From this survey at least, it would appear that faculty and administrators do not have differing views regarding the application of academic freedom's legal protection to social media.

Ancillary findings were examined surrounding the views faculty and administrators held regarding the value of social media as a useful tool for communication. Administrators were significantly more likely than faculty members to view social media as useful in communicating. Data from the open-ended survey questions and interviews support this finding, with many

administrators praising the effect social media has had on communication in higher education while faculty members demonstrated more discretion.

This chapter attempted to present the data gathered from the PSMHES and subject interviews in a way that allows the reader to judge the results free from researcher bias. Chi-square analyses were presented and interpreted, allowing the reader to view the objective data gathered. The researcher's interpretation of the data will be presented in the following chapter.



## **Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion**

### **Introduction**

Research on the use of social media by higher education faculty and administrators is limited. The use of social media by those in higher education falls under the protections of academic freedom, yet it has the potential to complicate existing tensions between institutional policies and those who wish to exercise their academic freedom. Against that background, the purpose of this study is to determine the impact of the intersectionality of the use of social media by higher education faculty and administrators, higher education academic freedom, and institutional legal policies.

In this chapter, the researcher explains the results of the study by including: a) a summary of the results; b) a discussion of the results in relation to the literature; c) limitations of the research; d) implication of the results for practice, policy, and theory; and e) recommendations for further research.

### **Summary of the Results**

This study was driven by the following primary research question and its sub-questions:

- What impact does the intersectionality of faculty academic freedom and administrators' policies on social media usage have on higher education's function?

The research question was expanded upon by the following sub-questions:

- What differences exist between higher education faculty and administrators' personal and professional use of social media?
- What is the difference between administrator and faculty views on whether academic freedom applies to social media usage in higher education?
- What is the difference between administrator and faculty views regarding the application of academic freedom legal protections to social media?

The framework developed to answer these questions utilized a postpositivist research paradigm (Phillips & Burbules, 2000) coupled with legal research concepts (Putman & Albright, 2010) and the comparative-historical viewpoint (Mahoney, 2004). The study is a descriptive research design with the intent to describe the intersectionality and its repercussions, but not specific cause or effect relationships. This descriptive research used a survey and interview approach to gather data. From this data, constructs, which align with the three research sub-questions were identified and analyzed to answer the primary research question.

### **Discussion of Results in Relation to the Literature**

The three constructs include the personal and professional use of social media, the intersection of academic freedom and social media, and the intersection of institutional legal protections and academic freedom. Cumulatively, the analyses of the constructs provide an overarching response to the primary research question. Each construct is discussed centering on the researcher's personal interpretation, interview responses, thematic responses from open-ended survey questions, supporting citations, study purpose, theoretical implications, and explanations for results.

**Use of social media.** Both faculty and administrators use social media in their personal and professional lives but to varying degrees, for varied purposes, and with different audiences. These variances account for the differences found in faculty and administrators' use of social media. Administrators were found to be more likely to use social media in their professional lives than faculty. Administrators indicated in the open-ended responses and interviews that they were more inclined to utilize social media as a means to connect with alumni and donors, to market specific programs and events, and to increase student engagement. Administrators also used social media more than faculty personally, as they are indirectly associated with students and do not have the same concerns as faculty of blurring personal and professional lives (AAUP, 2014).

Administrators focused generally on the positive elements of personal social media use, mentioning the entertainment aspects and their ability to keep up on trends in their industry. Administrator responses included frequent mentions of the value social media provides to their professional responsibilities. Two of the interviewed respondents even made clear that managing social media accounts was a large portion of their job, with one noting, “I also oversee all social media accounts for a liberal arts college at a large research institution...social media is a great way to connect with potential and current students, donors and alumni”. This finding is backed by Reuben’s (2008) study of 148 institutions, most institutions were designating administrators to manage social media at their institutions as a job description. None of the administrator respondents noted concerns about privacy or inappropriate contact with students.

Research by Reuben (2008) and Hanover Research (2014) reinforce the findings of the study about administrators and their attitudes towards social media. According to Reuben (2008) administrators of colleges and universities have realized the potential, implications, and power of including social media in recruiting, marketing, and providing information to alumni. Specifically, social media offers opportunities for administrators tasked with university advancement to stay connected with alumni. This is important to administrators charged with raising a steady stream of donations for the institution, because alumni who remain connected and informed about their alma mater are more likely to become regular donors to the university or college. Furthermore, administrators who are further removed from students than faculty through social media are able to “humanize stories” of their students and alumni, which according to Solis (2008) leads to the creation of commitment and devotion, in cash or kind to an institution they grow to respect.

Conversely, faculty members were quick to point out the potential dangers of using social media and a general resistance to integrating the technology into their professional lives. The findings in the study on faculty use of technology are supported by Kleiner, Thomas, and Lewis

(2007) who note that a majority of faculty are both resistant to change and have a lack of interest in adopting social media into their lives. While most of the faculty members interviewed were supportive of the use of social media, they frequently stressed the importance of maintaining a professional distance from their students. Faculty members expressed more reservations about the dangers of personal social media accounts. Faculty pointed out the challenge of keeping their personal lives separate from their professional lives, with many citing previous experiences of students discovering their personal accounts and being inappropriate. According to the Academic Freedom and Electronic Communications report (2014), “a classroom is not simply a physical space, but any location, real or virtual, in which” the instructor may be found (p. 46). Personally and professionally, faculty members are far more likely to use email as their primary method of communication rather than social media sites (Roblyer et al., 2010). While many faculty members have adopted the use of social media sites, according to a survey by Sturgeon and Walker (2009) there is a belief that such sites are a “double-edged sword”, simultaneously offering the benefits of relationship building and student engagement, but also blurring the lines of professional conduct.

**Academic freedom and social media.** Analysis showed that faculty members are more likely to believe the protections of academic freedom apply to social media in higher education than administrators. This data is supported by the open-ended questions and interview responses, wherein faculty were quite clear about their belief that social media is like any other form of academic communication and therefore protected by social media. Faculty responses demonstrated knowledge regarding academic freedom as well as putting high priority on its protections and applications. This makes sense from a historical perspective of the development of academic freedom. Many of the fundamental cases that serve as the bedrock of academic freedom involved attempts from governmental (*Sweezy v. New Hampshire*, 1957 and *Shelton v. Tucker*, 1960) and institutional authorities (*Keyishian v. Board of Regents*, 1965) to impugn the First Amendment

rights of faculty members. Faculty members appear to be quite cognizant of the past issues surrounding academic freedom and the ensuing legal battles, leading them to place a high value on the protections.

Administrators were far more likely to be undecided on the matter or have no strong opinions. By delving into the open-ended questions and interview responses, it becomes evident that many administrators are simply unconcerned about academic freedom. One interview respondent mentioned, “academic freedom doesn’t come up in the day-to-day particulars of my job...it’s something I read about in grad school, but not a concept I’ve had to use professionally”. Research by Reuben (2008) makes it clear that administrators’ interactions with social media rarely encroach on territory where academic freedom may come into play. Though administrators may not frequently encounter academic freedom issues in their jobs, it is a concept with which all must be familiar. While none of the administrators mentioned in their open-ended questions or interviews any desire to squelch faculty free speech, faculty members are likely more cognizant of these past actions than their administrative counterparts.

This difference in view is key to understanding issues at the core of the problem. Not only is there a difference in usage of social media, but in the perception and beliefs regarding the application of academic freedom to social media. Fundamentally, administrators are more ambivalent in their views towards academic freedom applying to this new technology. This contrasting view of the usage of social media means that faculty members and administrators may not see the same issues being present on social media. The difference in their professional duties has changed their perspective towards this issue.

**Legal protections of academic freedom.** Analysis of this theme proved to be ambiguous in nature. While a plurality of respondents agreed the legal protections of academic freedom should be applied to social media, many demonstrated an ignorance of those legal protections or

how to apply them. Further, a surprisingly large proportion of both faculty and administrators did not believe that the legal protections of academic freedom applied to social media, which contradicts the findings of sub-question two. This could be indicative of a perplexed higher education community, either with the legal protections of academic freedom or with the integration of new technology into their lives.

Current events demonstrate the level of confusion surrounding the legal protections of academic freedom when applied to social media. Numerous instances have been detailed in this study to demonstrate some of the most recent instances of faculty invoking academic freedom protections for their use of social media (see Chasmar, 2015; Jaschik, 2015; Leck, 2015; and Marcelo, 2015). The case of Steven Salaita in particular demonstrates this divide clearly. Salaita, a Palestinian-American, was offered a tenured position at the University of Illinois (Mackey, 2014). However, when some pro-Israel groups found out about his appointment they petitioned the university to stop the appointment, charging him with anti-Semitism based on statements he had made on Twitter. When the university's Board of Trustees voted not to approve Salaita's hiring, the university's chancellor wrote that while she felt Salaita's statements were protected by academic freedom, the manner of delivery was considered abusive and demeaning (Mackey, 2014). This instance shows that even when both faculty and administrator feel that academic freedom applies, they do not agree on the protections granted by academic freedom.

Finally, a lack of significant findings on sub-question three are indicative of two potential outcomes. It may be a methodological issue, such as the phrasing of the questions, the sample, or error on part of the researcher. It is also possible there is a genuine lack of significance between the two groups and their perceptions of how the legal protections of academic freedom should be applied. Analysis of the open-ended questions and interview responses indicate that the second option is more likely. Multiple respondents from both groups made noticeable errors regarding the

legal protections of academic freedom (e.g., believing institutions can require a “savings clause” on social media accounts, faculty cannot critique their institution on social media). Though only 10% of survey respondents indicated they did not understand academic freedom, it is evident from reviewing the open-ended responses that the true proportion is higher. While it is understandable that not all faculty and administrators have a complex and nuanced understanding of the legal protections of academic freedom, this could prove troublesome in the policy development and enforcement aspect of an administrator’s job.

### **Limitations**

Two key limitations were evident in the execution of this study: self-selection of participants in the sample and the lack of testing for validity and reliability of the survey. First, the use of a survey brings with it some pronounced limitations (Bertrand & Mullainathan, 2001; Fowler, 2014; Wright, 2006). As Bertrand Mullainathan (2001) note, there is danger in relying on subjective data produced by surveys as dependent variables. Any testing instrument is only as good as its design, and even though the PSMHES was not tested for reliability and validity, the researcher and outside experts aligned the process of survey development with Fowler’s (2014) process and provided content validity, respectively.

The second limitation found was sampling. First, the 100 participants who took the PSMHES is not considered an adequate sample size by most methodology experts (Creswell, 2009; Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). Given the total population of higher education administrators and faculty members can be conservatively estimated at greater than two million (Ginder et al., 2014), a larger sample size would have been ideal. Krejcie and Morgan (1970) contend that for a population greater than one million a minimum sample size should be 384 participants to achieve a standard error of .05%. However, this sample size was unattainable due to resource limitations.

The participants were also self-selected and that leads to bias, however to reduce the threat to internal validity posed, the participants were part of a random pool of administrators and faculty.

The semi-structured interviews were limited in their diversity. A total of five administrators and four faculty members were interviewed. All subjects were from a private institution in the Pacific NW.

### **Implications of the Results for Practice, Policy, and Theory**

The current state of literature proves this line of research is very much in its infancy. Studies have been conducted on the value of social media's use as a teaching tool in the classroom (see Chen & Bryer, 2012; Dabbagh & Kitsantas, 2011; Greenhow, Sonnevend, & Agur, 2016) and the value of social media to organizations (see Gruz, Staves, & Wilk, 2012; Gu & Widen-Wulff, 2011; Jung, Naughton, Tahoun, & Wang, 2015). However, this literature addresses applications of social media, rather than the more esoteric concepts of First Amendment rights, faculty autonomy, and the scope of institutional control over their employees.

Having assessed the findings of this study, it is evident job function (e.g., administrator, faculty member) has a clear impact on one's views towards academic freedom and social media usage. Administrators are more likely to use social media in their personal and professional lives, but are less willing to believe the protections of academic freedom apply to social media. Faculty, while still avid users of social media, are more likely to believe it falls under the protections of academic freedom, but demonstrate more concern about the potential downsides of social media use in general. The intersection where faculty academic freedom and administrator's social media policies meet is, at the moment, one of confusion and contrasting views. The educational research community needs to pay greater attention to this confluence of interests or social media scandals will continue to mar the landscape of higher education.



These results should have a direct influence on the greater community of practice in higher education. This study indicates not only that there is a gap in perception about social media and academic freedom, but also a divergence between how administrators and faculty value academic freedom. While the initial survey results indicated a prominent disparity between the two groups studied, the open-ended questions and interviews demonstrated a greater level of understanding. However, it should still be noted there is a pronounced difference between administrators and faculty members in their perspective on this issue.

The larger community of scholars should take this study as an indication of the necessity for further research on the subject. Like many descriptive studies, this work should be used to open a scholarly dialogue and provide starting points for further investigation. It is clear this is an area in need of greater examination by the research community at large.

**Practice.** The results of this study are indicative of two issues with which higher education institutions should be concerned. The results of the PSMHES demonstrate a clear lack of understanding of the function and necessity of academic freedom among higher education administrators. This deficit in knowledge among those who are often tasked with enforcing policy could at best cause administrative challenges and at worst expose the institution to liability (Levinson, 2007).

From a practical standpoint, institutions would be wise to try to combat this ignorance among their administrators. While follow-up interviews demonstrated that administrators with prior faculty experience were well versed in academic freedom and saw its value, these interviews also reaffirmed that administrators without such experience were completely uninformed of the concept. Institutions may benefit by creating programming or literature to educate administrators in positions of authority on the core principals of academic freedom. The goal should be to

demonstrate how academic freedom might affect their position and interactions with fellow administrators, faculty members, and students.

A further implication to the practice of higher education comes from the clear need for distinct social media policies created with academic freedom in mind. A recent examination on the state of social media policies in higher education by Pomerantz, Hank, and Sugimoto (2015) showed that less than one-quarter of institutions have social media policies. Of those policies, some were found to encourage behavior explicitly violating core concepts of academic freedom (Pomerantz et al., 2015). Many institutions are either not protecting themselves and their employees from academic freedom violations or have created policy that puts the institution in a tenuous position.

Social media policies should not be viewed as an unnecessary tool or extraneous bureaucracy. All higher education institutions need to develop sound social media policies that are compliant with the legal protections of academic freedom. Similarly, due to the fast pace of technology, these policies need to be frequently revisited so newer social networking tools and sites can be examined promptly, hopefully preventing potential issues.

**Policy.** Likely the greatest implications from this study are in the policy arena. The data from the PSMHES, combined with the gap in literature revealed in the literature review, point to a clear need for further policy research surrounding social media and academic freedom. While this topic will be addressed in detail in the next section, some fundamental policy implications were uncovered in this study.

Although examining the specific elements of social media policies was not the goal of this study, the literature review and interviews revealed some interesting data regarding what faculty and administrators believe social media policies can restrict. For example, in both the PSMHES and semi-structured interviews, numerous participants mentioned they believed institutions could

restrict the use of their trademarks or intellectual property (e.g., university name, logo). This belief, which is reinforced in a study by Pomerantz, Hank, and Sugimoto (2015), has been directly contradicted by a National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) report from their general counsel (Purcell, 2012). Similarly, many participants put forth the idea that faculty and administrators should be required to put a statement on their social media profiles indicating any opinions expressed are solely their own and do not reflect the opinion of their institution. Similar to the example above, the NLRB has determined that such a requirement violates employees First Amendment rights and should not be put into policy (Purcell, 2012). While an employee may voluntarily insert such a clause, to require it would violate the National Labor Relations Act and ensuing case law interpreting the Act (Fischl, 1989; Purcell, 2012).

Policy is not solely about restrictions, however. Many participants made it clear that their teaching duties are no longer confined to the classroom, and social media policy needs to reflect this development. The American Association of University Professors' (2014) recommendations for social media policies note that a well-written policy should take into account the concept of the digital classroom, with teachers and students now communicating, teaching, and sharing outside of class as much as inside. Of note, a majority of respondents on the PSMHES ( $n = 63$ ) indicated they had used social media as a teaching tool in some manner (e.g., incorporated social media into assignments, encouraged students to use social media for research). This is indicative of the need for policymakers to take this issue seriously.

**Theory.** There is a distinct and noticeable gap between theory and practice concerning social media policies and academic freedom. The majority of the literature focuses on two pillars: gathering quantitative data about the prevalence of social media (such as Bart, 2011; Nielsen, 2012; Pew Research Center, 2015) and experimental data about its use as a teaching tool (such as Antin, 2011; Baird & Fischer, 2005; Greenhow, Sonnevend, & Agur, 2016; Tess, 2013). While

this data is valuable, additional perspectives would add further depth to the research community's understanding of this subject. The current state of research adds little to the practical elements of designing and implementing social media policies. Further study in this area is not simply recommended, it is vital to the evolution of higher education and technology.

### **Further Study**

A primary motivating factor for this study was the lack of research focusing on academic freedom and social media. Due to this shortage of research, the study was intentionally wide in scope in hopes of describing the current state of affairs as well as discovering the many areas that might benefit from further research. While any research study is limited in its coverage, the following suggestions are motivated not only by areas unable to be covered by this single study, but also by the many questions raised during its execution.

The implementation of this study was problematic due to resource limitations and access. As such, further studies could likely expand on the validity of the results with a number of alterations. Other studies should concentrate on getting a larger sample to survey or pare down the survey to be shorter and focus on specific elements or dimensions of perceptions. The post-survey interviews, designed to provide depth to the survey results, proved to be quite intriguing and indicate a case study or interview-based methodology may very well uncover further issues or areas of interest.

While demographic information was recorded in this study, further research could focus on the differences in perceptions of social media and academic freedom as it relates to various demographic factors (e.g., gender, age, educational attainment). The sample pool for the survey element of this study was drawn from a mixed group of institutions, yet this was not the focus of the research question. Additional studies could be geared towards a comparison between different categories of institutions, such as the public and private delineation, or for-profit compared to non-

profit. Time and resources permitting, a comparison between different levels of higher education institutions (e.g. community college, four-year institution) may also benefit the research community.

A question that was repeatedly raised during the open-ended questions and interview elements of the study was of best practices for social media policies. Though some best practices have been noted in this study, the greater higher education community would benefit immensely from a thorough inquiry into which specific elements of social media policies have proven effective and which challenge the nature of academic freedom. Input from policy experts, legal scholars, and higher education veterans could provide a template for the many universities that do not possess these policies and may be hesitant to create their own.

Finally, while the focus of this study was on administrators and faculty, a major element of higher education was predominantly ignored: students. Though faculty and administrator use of social media has continued to climb, students have always outpaced their elders in use of these technologies (Gikas & Grant, 2013; Pew Research Center, 2015). Students are utilizing social media to share at unprecedented levels and with this usage come many concerns (Rost, Stahel, & Frey, 2016). Future research on student use of social media could focus on many different avenues including social media “contracts”, surveillance of student social media, school-sponsored groups’ use of social media, or student’s academic freedom concerns. While these are but a few suggestions, this is a largely unrealized area of research in need of greater attention from the scholarly community.

## **Conclusion**

The goal of this study was to investigate the impact the intersection of faculty academic freedom and administrators’ policies have on social media use. In this regard, it was successful. These two groups, who work closely together in the day-to-day operation of this nation’s higher

education institutions, view academic freedom in a fundamentally different manner.

Administrators view social media as a tool for learning, marketing, recruiting, and communicating with their students and other institutions. They perceive social media as less dangerous and are more comfortable with faculty members integrating it into their classrooms and interacting with their students. On the other hand, faculty members repeatedly demonstrated an unease with using social media to interact with students and even their fellow scholars. Faculty members were also keenly aware of the danger of encroachment on their rights from social media policies. Both groups saw the need for social media policies to address the many potential dangers of the medium.

There is a fundamental difference in perception regarding social media and academic freedom between these two professional roles. Faculty members expressed concerns about how they interact with their students through social media, a means of communication that might blur the lines of professionalism in the student-teacher relationship. Administrators, conversely, primarily use social media to communicate with those they do not know, such as potential students or alumni. This leads to a vastly different perception of the value and use of social media. For faculty it can invoke fear and danger, a threat to their livelihood. A breakdown of the student-teacher dichotomy could prove disastrous. Administrators, however, view social media as just another useful tool for marketing the university, programs, sports teams, and events. They are either interacting with unknown potential students or alumni, who have an inbuilt sense of loyalty to the institution. Administrators are not making personal connections the way faculty members are, instead they are conveying facts using another tool at their disposal. Administrators, unlike faculty members, are not encountering potential academic freedom issues in their use of social media, surely a contributing factor to their differing beliefs.

Academic freedom has long been a contentious legal issue in the higher education community (Areen, 2009). The history of academic freedom has shown an ever-shifting balance between institutional autonomy, faculty freedom to research, teach, and publish what they like, and students' desire to express their opinions on the issues of the day (O'Neil, 2011). Social media is but the latest battleground for testing the limits of free expression. As a technology and means of communication, social media has demonstrated a sticking power beyond what early cynics may have thought. Though the mechanism of communication may shift as certain sites or applications fade in and out of relevance, social media is, for the foreseeable future, here to stay.

It is undoubtedly true the higher education community has reaped many benefits from social media. However, without further research, well-crafted policy, and sensible practices, there is potential for great harm to the entirety of the academic industry. To quote futurist Alvin Toffler's seminal work *Future Shock*, "our technological powers increase, but the side effects and potential hazards also escalate" (1970, p. 429). These words, prescient nearly a half-century ago, need to be understood by all in the higher education world. Social media has enabled a communication revolution, but like all revolutions, care must be taken to ensure the future is better than that which was upended.

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## **APPENDICES**

## **APPENDIX A: Introduction Letter to Study Participants**

### Perceptions of Social Media in Higher Education Survey

**Thank you for your interest and time to learn about our research study:** Social Media Policies and Academic Freedom: Higher Education Faculty and Administrator Perceptions.

The study is to determine how higher education faculty members and higher education administrators perceive the interplay between social media usage and academic freedom. Your response will help to shed some light on this new and complex subject and move forward the discussion about teaching, First Amendment rights, and the role institutional policy plays in determining faculty members' speech. For this study, you only need to take this online survey. You were selected by Qualtrics to participate in this panel because you work or have worked in higher education as a faculty member or administrator. We are asking over 100 individuals to participate. The study will continue for one year, from June, 2016 – June, 2017.

#### **What you will do:**

The survey should take approximately 30 minutes to complete. It consists of 8 demographic questions, 7 questions about social media usage, and 16 questions if of how strongly you agree or disagree with statement about social media. You will be able to write your own words, thoughts or ideas, at the end of the survey, if you wish. You can skip a questions, choosing not to answer, if you wish. Your answers will not be linked to your name or any other personal identifiable information.

#### **Data protection:**

The answers you give are anonymous. The study will take all of the answers from all individuals and summarize the responses in aggregate. In publications, the data will be reported by groups, using summary analysis such as frequencies or averages. The name of individuals and the name of institutions where individuals work will not be identified or reported. You shouldn't list names or other identifiable information in you're the section where you can share your thoughts and feelings. If you do write a name of an institution or other such identifiable information, the principal investigator will remove this information as soon as possible.

When the study is complete, the database of answers to the survey questions will be downloaded from the web-based survey software tool, and saved to a password protected and fire-wall enabled computer. This data will be kept for three years, as required for research ethics, and then will be destroyed.

#### **Risks and benefits of participating:**

The questions are not intended or predicted to be stress inducing. There are questions which you might consider private, but since no personal identifying information is being collected, your answer will not be linked back to you. We do not anticipate any risk other than the common and low risk of being on the internet. The benefit will be having a voice in describing your thoughts and feelings about social media and contributing to increased knowledge about social media, the First Amendment, and institutional policies in higher education.

**Withdraw from the study or questions on the study:**

Should you have questions about the use of your data, you may contact the researcher at ADiamond@mail2.cu-portland.edu. Since your data is collected anonymously, we would not be able to remove your data from the collection (pool) of data we have at the end of the study. If you have a question about the study or data in the study, you may contact Concordia University - Portland's Institutional Review Board director, Dr. OraLee Branch at OBranch@cu-portland.edu.

**Consent by clicking below:**

By clicking the "Next" button below you acknowledge that you have read the above information, and are volunteering your consent for this study. Please print this page for your copy.

Sincerely,

Andrew Diamond



## **APPENDIX B: Perceptions of Social Media in Higher Education Survey**

### **Section One: Demographic Information**

The following questions are for demographic purposes only. This data will be used to compare different groups (e.g., non-profit public faculty to non-profit private faculty) for analysis and significance. When asked questions about your institution or job title, please use your current employer and title, or most recent employer and title (if unemployed or retired).

Q1 Please indicate your gender:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female

Q2 Please indicate your age group:

- ☐ 18-29 years old
- ☐ 30-49 years old
- ☐ 50-64 years old
- ☐ 65 years and over

Q3 Please describe your race/ethnicity:

- ☐ White
- ☐ Black or African American
- ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
- ☐ Asian
- ☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Q4 What is the highest level of education you have completed:

- ☐ High school diploma/GED
- ☐ Some college
- ☐ Bachelor's degree
- ☐ Master's degree
- ☐ Doctoral degree

Q5 What is your current employment status?

- ☐ Employed full-time
- ☐ Employed part-time
- ☐ Unemployed
- ☐ Retired
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Q6 Please describe the institution of your employment:

- ☐ Public
- ☐ Private non-profit, church affiliated
- ☐ Private non-profit, non-church affiliated
- ☐ Private, for-profit

Q7 What is the highest degree granted by your institution?

- ☐ Associate
- ☐ Bachelor
- ☐ Master
- ☐ Doctorate
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

Q8 Which of the following best fits your job title?

- ☐ Faculty member (titles such as teacher, professor, or instructor
- ☐ Administrator (titles such as director, coordinator, or president
- ☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Section Two: Social Media Usage

Please note that use of a social networking site can be passive. For example, having a Twitter account to follow others but not post.

Q9 Please indicate how frequently you use the following social networking sites for professional purposes:

	Never	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
Facebook	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Twitter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
LinkedIn	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pinterest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instagram	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Snapchat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q10 Please indicate how frequently you use the following social networking sites for personal purposes:

	Never	Yearly	Monthly	Weekly	Daily
Facebook	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Twitter	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
LinkedIn	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pinterest	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Instagram	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Snapchat	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Q11 Which best describes your use of social media?

- ☐ Predominantly professional
- ☐ Predominantly personal
- ☐ Balanced
- ☐ I don't use social media

Q12 Have you ever used social media as a teaching tool?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not sure

Q13 Does your institution have a social media policy?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ Not sure

Q14 If your institution has a social media policy, have you read it?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ My institution doesn't have a social media policy

Q15 If your institution has a social media policy, has it altered the manner in which you utilize social media (e.g., haven't posted information for fear of violating policy, made account private)?

- ☐ Yes
- ☐ No
- ☐ My institution doesn't have a social media policy

### Section Three: Attitudes Toward Social Media

Q16 Please rank your response to the statements using the scale provided.

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
a) Social media is a useful tool for communication.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Social media is a useful tool to disseminate scholarly information to the public.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) What I say on social media represents my institution.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d) Faculty should be required to provide a disclaimer indicating their institution does not endorse their posts on social media.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
e) Institutions should be allowed to monitor their faculty member's social media postings.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
f) Faculty members should be held to a higher	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<p>standard of conduct than the general public on social media.</p> <p>g) Faculty members should be allowed to interact with their students on a personal level via social media.</p> <p>h) The content of one's social media posts should be taken into consideration in employment decisions (e.g., hiring, tenure).</p>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

#### Section Four: Attitudes Toward Social Media Policies

Q17 Please rank your response to the statements using the scale provided.

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
a) A well-written social media policy protects the rights of faculty members.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) A well-written social media policy protects the rights of the institution.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) Social media policies should prevent faculty members or administrators from criticizing their institution.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d) Social media policies should be utilized to restrict access to harmful and/or controversial information.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Section Five: Academic Freedom and Social Media

Q18 Please rank your responses to the statements using the scale provided.

	Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Somewhat agree	Strongly agree
a) I have a good understanding of academic freedom.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
b) Academic freedom is necessary in higher education.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
c) Social media postings are protected by academic freedom.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
d) Academic freedom protects both the content (what is said) in social media and the delivery method (language or pictures used).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



**Section Six: Open-ended Response**

Please answer with as much or as little detail as you like. These responses will help to inform the analysis of the survey results. Remember, responses are completely anonymous.

Q19 Do you use social media? Why or why not?

Q20 What are your thoughts about the role of social media in higher education?

Q21 What do you think about social media policies?

Q22 Please add any comments you may have about social media, academic freedom, or social media policies.

## **APPENDIX C: Interview Letter, Consent Form, and Questions**

### **Interview Introduction Letter**

Dear Dr. \_\_\_\_\_,

My name is Andrew Diamond and I am working on my dissertation for my Doctorate of Education at Concordia University. You have been contacted because Dr. \_\_\_\_\_ has recommended you as a potential participant for a brief interview.

The purpose of this interview process is to gain a greater understanding about how higher education faculty and administrators view the use of social media in higher education as it pertains to academic freedom. As such, questions will be centered on how you yourself may use social media, its role in the classroom, and the use of social media in administrative decisions.

The interview will be conducted in one of two methods. First, you may choose to engage purely through email, writing your responses to the questions in an email reply. Second, you may utilize a Google Document hosted by me that will contain both your responses to the questions as well as my follow-up questions. Due to security issues surrounding email, Concordia University's Institutional Review Board recommends the use of a Google Document.

If you would consider participating, please read the attached consent form and respond to this email. When I receive your response, I will send you either an email or a Google Document containing the initial interview questions.

Sincerely,

Andrew Diamond

## **Consent Form**

**Research Study Title:** Social Media Policies and Academic Freedom: Higher Education Faculty and Administrator Perceptions

**Principal Investigator:** Andrew Diamond

**Research Institution:** Concordia University-Portland

**Faculty Advisor:** Professor Chris Jenkins

This consent form is being provided for your records and to give you full information. You can only participate after you read this and if you consent (see last page). A signature is not required.

### **Purpose and what you will be doing:**

The purpose of this interview process is to gain a greater understanding about how higher education faculty and administrators view the use of social media in higher education as it pertains to academic freedom. As such, questions will be centered on how you yourself may use social media, its role in the classroom, and the use of social media in administrative decisions.

The interview will be conducted in one of two methods. First, you may choose to engage purely through email, writing your responses to the questions in a reply to this message. Second, you may utilize a Google Document hosted by me that will contain both your responses to the questions as well as my follow-up questions. Due to security issues surrounding email, Concordia University's Institutional Review Board Recommends the use of a Google Document.

### **Risks:**

There are no risks to participating in this study other than providing your information. However, your information will be kept confidential. Any quotes or information provided by you used in the study will not be attributed to you by name or other personal identifying information.

### **Benefits:**

Information you provide for this study will help to further the understanding of the complex interplay between social media and academic freedom. Many universities do not have social media policies, and those that do frequently violate basic standards of labor law. You, and other higher education professionals, could benefit as a result of policies created with a more nuanced understanding of academic freedom as it relates to this new technology.

**Confidentiality:**

This information will not be distributed to any other agency and will be kept private and confidential. The only exception is if you provide information about abuse or neglect that makes the researcher seriously concerned about your immediate health and safety.

**Right to Withdraw:**

Your participation is greatly appreciated, but I acknowledge that these questions could be considered personal in nature. You are free at any point to choose not to engage with or stop your participation in the study. You may choose not to respond to any questions you do not wish to answer. This study is not required and there is no penalty for not participating.

**Contact Information:**

This email is considered the consent form for this study. If you have further questions you can respond to this email to contact the researcher, Andrew Diamond at email [andrewcdiamond@gmail.com](mailto:andrewcdiamond@gmail.com) . If you want to talk to a participant advocate other than the investigator, you can write or call the director of our Institutional Review Board, Dr. OraLee Branch (Email: [obranch@cu-portland.edu](mailto:obranch@cu-portland.edu) Phone: 503-493-6390).

**Your Statement of Consent:**

You do not need to sign this consent form. It is being provided for your records.

**If you agree to consent, please send an email to [andrewcdiamond@gmail.com](mailto:andrewcdiamond@gmail.com) with your name and with you stating that you consent to participation.**

Investigator: Andrew Diamond, email: [andrewcdiamond@gmail.com](mailto:andrewcdiamond@gmail.com)

c/o: Professor Chris Jenkins

Concordia University – Portland

2811 NE Holman Street

Portland, Oregon 97221

## **Interview Questions**

1. Do you utilize social media in your personal and/or professional life? Why or why not?
2. What are your general thoughts about social media policies and their impact on your role as faculty/administrator?
3. Do you view social media as having the protections of academic freedom?
4. What are your thoughts about social media being used as a teaching tool in higher education?
5. How do you feel about student-teacher interaction via social media?
6. Do you believe that higher education professionals should be considered representatives of their institution on social media?
7. What are your opinions on using social media posts with regards to employment decisions (e.g., hiring, tenure)?

## APPENDIX D: Descriptive Statistics

Mean, standard deviation, and frequency.

### Professional Use of Social Networking Sites

#### Statistics

		Facebook - Pro	Twitter - Pro	LinkedIn - Pro	Pinterest - Pro	Instagram - Pro	Snapchat - Pro
N	Valid	100	100	100	100	100	100
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		3.54	2.62	2.79	2.44	2.42	1.91
Std. Deviation		1.566	1.656	1.423	1.546	1.646	1.443

#### Facebook - Pro

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	21	21.0	21.0	21.0
	Yearly	6	6.0	6.0	27.0
	Monthly	11	11.0	11.0	38.0
	Weekly	22	22.0	22.0	60.0
	Daily	40	40.0	40.0	100.0
Total		100	100.0	100.0	

#### Pinterest - Pro

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	48	48.0	48.0	48.0
	Yearly	6	6.0	6.0	54.0
	Monthly	12	12.0	12.0	66.0
	Weekly	22	22.0	22.0	88.0
	Daily	12	12.0	12.0	100.0
Total		100	100.0	100.0	

#### Twitter - Pro

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	45	45.0	45.0	45.0
	Yearly	7	7.0	7.0	52.0
	Monthly	9	9.0	9.0	61.0
	Weekly	19	19.0	19.0	80.0
	Daily	20	20.0	20.0	100.0
Total		100	100.0	100.0	

#### Instagram - Pro

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	53	53.0	53.0	53.0
	Yearly	2	2.0	2.0	55.0
	Monthly	14	14.0	14.0	69.0
	Weekly	12	12.0	12.0	81.0
	Daily	19	19.0	19.0	100.0
Total		100	100.0	100.0	

#### LinkedIn - Pro

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	31	31.0	31.0	31.0
	Yearly	7	7.0	7.0	38.0
	Monthly	27	27.0	27.0	65.0
	Weekly	22	22.0	22.0	87.0
	Daily	13	13.0	13.0	100.0
Total		100	100.0	100.0	

#### Snapchat - Pro

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	69	69.0	69.0	69.0
	Monthly	12	12.0	12.0	81.0
	Weekly	9	9.0	9.0	90.0
	Daily	10	10.0	10.0	100.0
Total		100	100.0	100.0	

#### Mean and Standard Deviation of Professional Usage of Social Networking Sites by Job Title

Job Title		Facebook - Pro		Twitter - Pro		LinkedIn - Pro		Pinterest - Pro		Instagram - Pro		Snapchat - Pro	
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Administrator (titles such as director, coordinator, or president)		4.07	1.20	3.07	1.60	2.93	1.23	2.30	1.47	2.77	1.63	2.17	1.56
Faculty member (titles such as teacher, professor, or instructor)		3.31	1.66	2.43	1.66	2.73	1.50	2.50	1.59	2.27	1.64	1.80	1.39

## Personal Use of Social Networking Sites

### Statistics

		Facebook - Per	Twitter - Per	LinkedIn - Per	Pinterest - Per	Instagram - Per	Snapchat - Per
N	Valid	100	100	100	100	100	100
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean		4.58	3.20	2.50	3.12	3.19	2.71
Std. Deviation		.945	1.664	1.360	1.546	1.625	1.701

#### Facebook - Per

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	5	5.0	5.0	5.0
	Monthly	2	2.0	2.0	7.0
	Weekly	18	18.0	18.0	25.0
	Daily	75	75.0	75.0	100.0
Total		100	100.0	100.0	

#### Pinterest - Per

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	28	28.0	28.0	28.0
	Yearly	5	5.0	5.0	33.0
	Monthly	18	18.0	18.0	51.0
	Weekly	25	25.0	25.0	76.0
	Daily	24	24.0	24.0	100.0
Total		100	100.0	100.0	

#### Twitter - Per

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	32	32.0	32.0	32.0
	Yearly	1	1.0	1.0	33.0
	Monthly	14	14.0	14.0	47.0
	Weekly	21	21.0	21.0	68.0
	Daily	32	32.0	32.0	100.0
Total		100	100.0	100.0	

#### Instagram - Per

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	31	31.0	31.0	31.0
	Yearly	1	1.0	1.0	32.0
	Monthly	15	15.0	15.0	47.0
	Weekly	24	24.0	24.0	71.0
	Daily	29	29.0	29.0	100.0
Total		100	100.0	100.0	

#### LinkedIn - Per

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	37	37.0	37.0	37.0
	Yearly	9	9.0	9.0	46.0
	Monthly	30	30.0	30.0	76.0
	Weekly	15	15.0	15.0	91.0
	Daily	9	9.0	9.0	100.0
Total		100	100.0	100.0	

#### Snapchat - Per

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Never	46	46.0	46.0	46.0
	Yearly	1	1.0	1.0	47.0
	Monthly	12	12.0	12.0	59.0
	Weekly	18	18.0	18.0	77.0
	Daily	23	23.0	23.0	100.0
Total		100	100.0	100.0	

#### Mean and Standard Deviation of Personal Usage of Social Networking Sites by Job Title

		Facebook - Per		Twitter - Per		LinkedIn - Per		Pinterest - Per		Instagram - Per		Snapchat - Per	
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Job Title	Administrator (titles such as director, coordinator, or president)	4.80	.76	3.63	1.63	2.83	1.29	3.37	1.63	3.43	1.65	3.23	1.76
	Faculty member (titles such as teacher, professor, or instructor)	4.49	1.00	3.01	1.65	2.36	1.37	3.01	1.51	3.09	1.61	2.49	1.64



## Attitudes Toward Social Media

### Statistics

	Useful Tool	Scholarly Information	Represent Institution	Faculty Disclaimer	Institution Monitor	Higher Standard	Student Interaction	Hiring Decisions
N	Valid	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
	Missing	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mean	4.38	3.81	3.47	3.32	2.74	3.57	3.04	3.03
Std. Deviation	.722	1.032	1.243	1.162	1.397	1.130	1.255	1.267

#### Useful Tool

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
Somewhat disagree	3	3.0	3.0	3.0
Neither agree nor disagree	5	5.0	5.0	8.0
Somewhat agree	43	43.0	43.0	51.0
Strongly agree	49	49.0	49.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

#### Scholarly Information

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
Strongly disagree	4	4.0	4.0	4.0
Somewhat disagree	9	9.0	9.0	13.0
Neither agree nor disagree	13	13.0	13.0	26.0
Somewhat agree	50	50.0	50.0	76.0
Strongly agree	24	24.0	24.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

#### Represent Institution

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
Strongly disagree	11	11.0	11.0	11.0
Somewhat disagree	9	9.0	9.0	20.0
Neither agree nor disagree	24	24.0	24.0	44.0
Somewhat agree	34	34.0	34.0	78.0
Strongly agree	22	22.0	22.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

#### Faculty Disclaimer

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
Strongly disagree	6	6.0	6.0	6.0
Somewhat disagree	23	23.0	23.0	29.0
Neither agree nor disagree	19	19.0	19.0	48.0
Somewhat agree	37	37.0	37.0	85.0
Strongly agree	15	15.0	15.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

#### Institution Monitor

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
Strongly disagree	27	27.0	27.0	27.0
Somewhat disagree	19	19.0	19.0	46.0
Neither agree nor disagree	20	20.0	20.0	66.0
Somewhat agree	21	21.0	21.0	87.0
Strongly agree	13	13.0	13.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

#### Higher Standard

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
Strongly disagree	4	4.0	4.0	4.0
Somewhat disagree	16	16.0	16.0	20.0
Neither agree nor disagree	22	22.0	22.0	42.0
Somewhat agree	35	35.0	35.0	77.0
Strongly agree	23	23.0	23.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

#### Student Interaction

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
Strongly disagree	15	15.0	15.0	15.0
Somewhat disagree	20	20.0	20.0	35.0
Neither agree nor disagree	22	22.0	22.0	57.0
Somewhat agree	32	32.0	32.0	89.0
Strongly agree	11	11.0	11.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

#### Hiring Decisions

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid				
Strongly disagree	18	18.0	18.0	18.0
Somewhat disagree	13	13.0	13.0	31.0
Neither agree nor disagree	28	28.0	28.0	59.0
Somewhat agree	30	30.0	30.0	89.0
Strongly agree	11	11.0	11.0	100.0
Total	100	100.0	100.0	

#### Mean and Standard Deviation of Attitudes Toward Social Media by Job Title

	Useful Tool		Scholarly Information		Represent Institution		Faculty Disclaimer		Institution Monitor		Higher Standard		Student Interaction		Hiring Decisions	
	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Job Title Administrator (titles such as director, coordinator, or president)	4.33	.55	4.10	.61	3.77	.94	3.27	1.05	2.73	1.34	3.27	.98	3.60	.93	3.30	1.02
Job Title Faculty member (titles such as teacher, professor, or instructor)	4.40	.79	3.69	1.15	3.34	1.34	3.34	1.21	2.74	1.43	3.70	1.17	2.80	1.30	2.91	1.35

## Attitudes Toward Social Media Policies

### Statistics

		Protect Faculty	Protect Institution	Prevent Criticism	Restrict Access
N	Valid	100	100	100	100
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		4.18	4.28	2.96	3.23
Std. Deviation		.809	.726	1.325	1.427

### Protect Faculty

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	1	1.0	1.0	1.0
	Somewhat disagree	3	3.0	3.0	4.0
	Neither agree nor disagree	10	10.0	10.0	14.0
	Somewhat agree	49	49.0	49.0	63.0
	Strongly agree	37	37.0	37.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

### Protect Institution

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Somewhat disagree	4	4.0	4.0	4.0
	Neither agree nor disagree	4	4.0	4.0	8.0
	Somewhat agree	52	52.0	52.0	60.0
	Strongly agree	40	40.0	40.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

### Prevent Criticism

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	18	18.0	18.0	18.0
	Somewhat disagree	23	23.0	23.0	41.0
	Neither agree nor disagree	16	16.0	16.0	57.0
	Somewhat agree	31	31.0	31.0	88.0
	Strongly agree	12	12.0	12.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

### Restrict Access

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	19	19.0	19.0	19.0
	Somewhat disagree	13	13.0	13.0	32.0
	Neither agree nor disagree	16	16.0	16.0	48.0
	Somewhat agree	30	30.0	30.0	78.0
	Strongly agree	22	22.0	22.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

### Mean and Standard Deviation of Attitudes Toward Social Media Policies by Job Title

		Protect Faculty		Protect Institution		Prevent Criticism		Restrict Access		Understand Academic Freedom	
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Job Title	Administrator (titles such as director, coordinator, or president)	4.10	.71	4.23	.57	2.67	1.24	3.17	1.34	4.00	.79
	Faculty member (titles such as teacher, professor, or instructor)	4.21	.85	4.30	.79	3.09	1.35	3.26	1.47	4.41	.67

## Academic Freedom and Social Media

### Statistics

		Understand Academic Freedom	Academic Freedom Necessary	Social Media Protected	Content Protected
N	Valid	100	100	100	100
	Missing	0	0	0	0
Mean		4.29	4.46	3.43	3.52
Std. Deviation		.729	.658	1.008	.979

#### Understand Academic Freedom

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Somewhat disagree	3	3.0	3.0	3.0
	Neither agree nor disagree	7	7.0	7.0	10.0
	Somewhat agree	48	48.0	48.0	58.0
	Strongly agree	42	42.0	42.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

#### Academic Freedom Necessary

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Somewhat disagree	1	1.0	1.0	1.0
	Neither agree nor disagree	6	6.0	6.0	7.0
	Somewhat agree	39	39.0	39.0	46.0
	Strongly agree	54	54.0	54.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

#### Social Media Protected

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	4	4.0	4.0	4.0
	Somewhat disagree	12	12.0	12.0	16.0
	Neither agree nor disagree	35	35.0	35.0	51.0
	Somewhat agree	35	35.0	35.0	86.0
	Strongly agree	14	14.0	14.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

#### Content Protected

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly disagree	4	4.0	4.0	4.0
	Somewhat disagree	6	6.0	6.0	10.0
	Neither agree nor disagree	41	41.0	41.0	51.0
	Somewhat agree	32	32.0	32.0	83.0
	Strongly agree	17	17.0	17.0	100.0
	Total	100	100.0	100.0	

#### Mean and Standard Deviation of Attitudes Toward Academic Freedom and Social Media

		Understand Academic Freedom		Academic Freedom Necessary		Social Media Protected		Content Protected	
		Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation	Mean	Standard Deviation
Job Title	Administrator (titles such as director, coordinator, or president)	4.00	.79	4.27	.69	3.30	.79	3.30	.79
	Faculty member (titles such as teacher, professor, or instructor)	4.41	.67	4.54	.63	3.49	1.09	3.61	1.04

## **APPENDIX E: Statement of Original**

### **Work**

The Concordia University Doctorate of Education Program is a collaborative community of scholar-practitioners, who seek to transform society by pursuing ethically-informed, rigorously-researched, inquiry-based projects that benefit professional, institutional, and local educational contexts. Each member of the community affirms throughout their program of study, adherence to the principles and standards outlined in the Concordia University Academic Integrity Policy. This policy states the following:

#### **Statement of academic integrity.**

As a member of the Concordia University community, I will neither engage in fraudulent or unauthorized behaviors in the presentation and completion of my work, nor will I provide unauthorized assistance to others.

#### **Explanations:**

##### ***What does “fraudulent” mean?***

“Fraudulent” work is any material submitted for evaluation that is falsely or improperly presented as one’s own. This includes, but is not limited to texts, graphics and other multi-media files appropriated from any source, including another individual, that are intentionally presented as all or part of a candidate’s final work without full and complete documentation.

##### ***What is “unauthorized” assistance?***

“Unauthorized assistance” refers to any support candidates solicit in the completion of their work, that has not been either explicitly specified as appropriate by the instructor, or any assistance that is understood in the class context as inappropriate. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Use of unauthorized notes or another’s work during an online test
- Use of unauthorized notes or personal assistance in an online exam setting
- Inappropriate collaboration in preparation and/or completion of a project
- Unauthorized solicitation of professional resources for the completion of the work.

## Statement of Original Work

I attest that:

1. I have read, understood, and complied with all aspects of the Concordia University-Portland Academic Integrity Policy during the development and writing of this dissertation.
2. Where information and/or materials from outside sources has been used in the production of this dissertation, all information and/or materials from outside sources has been properly referenced and all permissions required for use of the information and/or materials have been obtained, in accordance with research standards outlined in the *Publication Manual of The American Psychological Association*.

*Andrew Diamond*

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Digital Signature

Andrew Diamond

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Name (Typed)

3/28/17

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Date